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SCIENTIFIC FAITH

BY

HOWARD AGNEW JOHNSTON

AUTHOR OF "BIBLE CRITICISM AND THE AVERAGE MAN"
ETC., ETC.

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To My Wife

1953.

INTRODUCTION.

The scientific atmosphere permeates the thinking world of today; but much of the scholastic method persists in current discussion. In the realm of religious teaching many words and phrases still linger as the ear-marks of different schools of thought. Some of these terms are appropriate; others are unfortunate. It would be helpful if the statement of the truth which represents the reasonableness of the Christian faith could be free from certain stereotyped phrases, and enjoy the advantage of expression in a way not encumbered by old prejudices. The truth would not suffer if a fresh mode of statement should mark its emphasis.

In attempting the ambitious task of enlisting the reader's interest in the age-long fundamentals of the Christian faith, much of the traditional material has been set aside. This is not to deny its importance or validity. But since the power of the truth is revealed finally only in experience, it is evident that if the experience of the thinking world of our own time may be called to witness to the truth of the argument presented, the effectiveness of the statement will be greatly increased. And since this current experience is familiar with the scientific method of research, with its appeal to experimental

facts, the discussion seeks to lead the reader by this pathway.

Brevity is always at the risk of clearness. The need, however, is for a concise discussion. Therefore it is necessary to ask the reader to consider carefully each step in the argument, before coming to a conclusion. It is hoped the marginal notes suggesting the line of thought in each paragraph, will prove an assistance. The reader is requested to read these notes over again at the close of each chapter, should there be a desire to recall clearly the fulness of the argument.

This book is sent forth with the prayerful hope that it will prove helpful to many in confirming and establishing the reasonableness and the reality of the Christian faith.

HOWARD AGNEW JOHNSTON.

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THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD.

I.

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD.

The mistaken impression is abroad that this is an age of unusual intellectual unrest. A recent book begins with the words "we are living in an age of mental confusion." Another book has in its title "an age of doubt." A third book heralds ours as "an age of faith." Of course both faith and doubt are here, but above either of these designations we must write, "an age of facts." By which we mean that facts have a place dominating both inquiry and belief as never before. Doubt is not dominant, but hesitant. Faith is buoyant, and because of the facts. The attitude of the thinking world is settled regarding its method. It shall be inductive, seeking facts, and rejoicing that splendid progress is being made in the search for facts.

An age of facts.

There never was so much stability in the thinking world as now. Notwithstanding the successive revolutionary movements of the nineteenth century in the realm of research, nay, just because of these, a growing sense of certainty has become established. A century ago scarcely a town of importance was without its infidel club. A narrow point of view obtained

in regard to very many vital themes, and no man dreamed of the flood of light which was about to be poured on all our thinking and activity. But light is not a disturber of realities. It is a revealer of them. Therefore no age in human history has had so much of certainty in it as our own, so much of unanimity among the largest number of men regarding the great themes which the leaders of the world's thought and life count fundamental. At the beginning of the 19th century the Christians in the colleges of America numbered one in ten. To-day they number more than one in two, or fifty-three per cent. This is not an empty profession of conviction and allegiance, but a vigorous, active and increasing devotion of true and strong young Christians. We are too liable to forget the actual conditions of the past. Let us steady our too easily disconcerted nerves, and breathe quietly as we take a confident survey of the field.

Increasing stability in the thinking world.

Every fact in the realm of our knowledge is touched by a mystery. However simple and familiar the fact, the growth of a blade of grass, the circulation of the blood, it is touched by a mystery inscrutable to the human mind. But on the other hand every mystery which baffles the human understanding is touched by a plain, simple fact. Science is the knowledge of facts. So long as the fact is not clear, investigation is simply inquiry along the line of what

is probable in view of the facts already known. Certainty only comes after the fact is established and accepted. In the scientific world men are busy with theories, guesses, hypotheses regarding the unknown. They are searching for facts in the realm of mystery. It is of vital importance in this search that theories be not confused with facts. This is equally important whether the inquiry be in the scientific or religious realm. Opinions in both realms have too often been asserted as if guaranteed by facts, when the assumption was unwarranted.

Fact and mystery.

There are two ways of approaching the study of anything. One is to begin with its fact, to make the most of the fact, to push along the line of fact, until the mystery is reached, as it always will be; then to wait for more light, without discounting the fact one jot because it has a mystery touching it, but in the conviction that the development of the fact for all it is worth will tend toward further light. This is the scientific method. All the progress in the search for knowledge has been made by the adoption of this method. Let it be noted well. For there is a second method which is adopted by many in connection with certain facts. This second method approaches on the side of the mystery, and refuses to admit the fact until its mystery is solved. Of course this is not only unscientific but hopeless. Science repudiates the

The scientific method.

man who would adopt such a method. Yet many are thus unscientific. They accept certain facts and pay no heed to the mysteries connected with them. But certain other facts, as undeniable, they refuse to accept until they comprehend the mysteries which touch them.

It is very suggestive that these facts which many refuse to accept are in the realm of the moral consciousness. Yet it is the moral consciousness which involves that appreciation of fair and honest dealing with all the facts, in every realm of inquiry and experience, which is so often emphasized as essential to truly scientific research. There are men who use strong words about having the courage of conviction in the allegiance which we must ever give to the facts, however much they upset our previous opinions. The importance of such a spirit cannot be overstated. But let us remember that this attitude must obtain toward the facts in the moral realm as faithfully as toward the facts in the realms of mental and physical phenomena. Nay, the spiritual realm is marked by facts which involve the deepest realities in human experience, and if the student be truly scientific, he will be true to the spirit of loyalty to the facts here with even greater earnestness than needs to be displayed in the study of the external world.

Facts in the moral realm.

We have a striking case in point in the remarkable experience of Prof. George J. Romanes, of the Uni-

versity of Cambridge. For years he held to the position of the agnostic materialist, declaring he saw no reason for believing in the existence of God or the immortality of the soul. He claimed to be a student of nature, but one day he was surprised to realize that human nature is the most important part of nature. Yet he had ignored the higher facts in human life and experience, while diligently studying the physical world below man, as if spiritual realities had no existence. Later he frankly confessed that he had not been truly scientific during those years in which he had ignored the spiritual facts and forces in human experience. There are other men, great scholars, who have done the same thing. So long as they thus ignore some of the facts, they are manifestly not capable of having an intelligent opinion regarding the neglected subjects.

The case of Prof. Romanes.

There are some people who are anxious to be considered broad-minded. Sometimes these people will declare they cannot believe that which some one else believes. For example, they will say they cannot believe the teaching that God is love, because of the facts of sin and suffering in the world. Now when some men accept this teaching, and have a philosophy of life which includes all these various elements in the problem, and declare that they can see light shining where it is dark to others, manifestly the only thing to say is that these men have a larger, broader view than those who say

Who is the broad

minded man?

they cannot accept the same. He whose view takes in all the facts, without evading anything whatever, and sees a rock on which to stand, with a clear, strong hope for men, is the broadest-minded man possible. But they who ignore the whole range of spiritual facts, or any part thereof, are of necessity driven to so narrow a view of the problem of human life as to make its solution hopeless. They have no light for the pathway of progress. They may tell us about the things which they have studied, but not about the things which they have neglected.

There is a set of facts, tremendous and portentous facts, which rise to the point of highest importance in all human life. They are the facts which have to do with the making of character. If there be any hope for men, if there be any reality anywhere, then the most important facts in the world are those which relate to character. Every other set of facts takes on relative importance in view of its relation to the forces which are revealed in the building of character. Therefore it is beyond all controversy that men should study these facts with most earnest spirit, with truest fidelity to the scientific method, making the most of every appreciable fact, in spite of its difficulties and mysteries. Every lover of truth desires the light upon every subject. Every fact which gives us more light has penetrated the unknown and pushed back the mystery.

The facts which relate to character.

The scientific method makes a specific demand upon the student who hopes to be masterful in any department of life. It demands that he shall go to the greatest specialist in that department in which he is a student. He must study the facts to be found in that department under the guidance of this specialist, as the highest authority on the subject, and the teacher whose instructions must be followed faithfully in research and experiment. The reasonableness of this demand every one accepts. Let us apply it to the man who professes to be seeking mastery in the realm of character. For it is a fact of supreme importance that people of every faith, in every land, agree that Jesus Christ is the greatest specialist in character the world has ever known. By universal consent His character is the world's ideal, matchless and shining with a glory undimmed through the years.

Jesus Christ the greatest specialist in character.

Let us face fairly the full force of this fact. Let us be truly scientific in view of this demand which science makes upon every individual who professes to desire a character like that of Christ. There is no possible evasion of the logic in our thought. Every such individual must go to Jesus Christ as the highest authority on the subject for light and leading. The moment he refuses to go to Christ, he betrays his lack of sincerity regarding the real desire of his heart concerning character. If ever men should be urged to realize the necessity of being truly scientific

in seeking honestly for light on the pathway of progress, they must be urged to do so in this matter. To Christ they must go in order to possess a character like His, which all the world asserts is the finest ever known. It is not competent for men to say what they can or cannot believe about Christ before they go to Him as their teacher. They must be ready to begin the study of character in the school of Christ. What they may be able to believe will appear later.

The logic of this fact.

Anchored in the facts related to the making of character is the whole range of experiences connected with the realm of religion. Science rightly demands a special emphasis upon experience, and nowhere is experience more real and vital than in the sphere of the religious life. Never before were there so many facts to compel the honest consideration of earnest men as now. These are the facts which justify the opening statements in this chapter. The world never saw such activity in the name of religion as today. And it is to be noted that the vast majority of the leaders in the world's life, in the colleges of the leading nations, in the ranks of statesmen, in the number of those who devote time and money to the elevation of mankind, are the open followers of Jesus Christ. Therefore to ignore the life and teachings of Christ is to

Reality in the religious life.

be unscientific beyond any possibility of justification.

But the scientific method cuts deeper. The honest student of character cannot be true to his best manhood unless his purpose be clear to possess the character which Christ has revealed to men. Therefore in the nature of things the subject cannot be studied theoretically. Just as it would be impossible for the student of music to know the realities of music unless he studied to the end that he might reproduce the very product of the Master's life, so it is manifestly impossible to know the realities in religion, which crystallize in character, except as the student shall purpose, with all possible energy and concentration, to know the very character of Christ as the result of his effort. For manifestly the only final demonstration of the truth in this realm is in the actual life itself. Hence we have that illuminating statement concerning Christ, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John 1:4.) He who imagines that one could come to Christ to satisfy mere intellectual curiosity about mysteries, must see at once the futility of his efforts. All the moral obligation which inspires the truly scientific spirit in any realm of research becomes doubly intensified in its constraint upon the man who would be true in the realm of the moral life itself.

Not simply light, but life.

Since experience is the scientific basis of intelli-

gent conviction, men must enter the laboratory of character and put the claims and promises of Christ to the test. Let it be noted well that these claims of Christ can be verified, and that thousands who have verified them unanimously report them to be true, and that therefore Christ is proved to be trustworthy. When Prof. Roentgen announced his discovery of the X Ray to the world, many men, who were really anxious to possess the power claimed for it by its discoverer, determined to know the truth about it. They carefully obeyed every detail of instruction which Prof. Roentgen gave, went into the laboratory and produced the very thing itself. Thousands have never attempted this; but in the face of the testimony of every man who has actually tested the claim, the world would smile at one who announced his doubt as to the fact. Men would say to him: "Go into the laboratory, do exactly as the Master has taught, and you will find it." This is exactly the scientific answer to the man who expresses doubt about the claims of Jesus Christ. The honest man cannot escape its validity and its compelling constraint.

Christ's claims have been verified.

Deeper still the truth leads us along the line of the scientific method. Some men have hastily resented the statement that the deep realities in spiritual experience are only spiritually discerned. They repudiate the assertion of the apostle Paul that "the natural man receiveth not the things of

the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.) But Paul's statement is strictly scientific, and finds corroboration in every realm of experience. How familiar is the expression descriptive of a great lawyer that he has a fine legal mind. He can discern the law in difficult legal problems where others can never see it. Or how natural is the statement concerning a master in music that he has marvelous insight and interpretation. To such an one close harmonies touch the very depths of his responsive soul, which one having no musical discernment would consider only discords. It would all be foolishness to him. One great financier can see the solution of a gigantic problem, and finance successfully a great enterprise, where another, without financial discernment, would consider the thing utterly impossible. That is to say, Paul was simply applying a universal principle to a sphere of life where most men have not been such specialists as Paul was. The logic of the proposition is simply inevitable. The only way for the incapable and inexperienced student in law, or music, or finance to know what now he does not know, and cannot now appreciate, is to begin to learn at the feet of the masters in these spheres of knowledge and life.

Spiritual discernment scientific.

It is therefore a strictly scientific attitude which Jesus Christ maintains before men, as He gives

His invitation in the words, "Come unto me and learn of me." (Matt. 11:28-29.) He presumes no whit upon any man's credulity, but challenges men to put Him to the test, saying "by their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:16.) The man who has never come to Jesus Christ, to put Him fully to the test, is as incompetent to have an intelligent judgment concerning Him as the ignorant incapable in the sphere of law or music or finance would be to have an opinion regarding the masters in those spheres. Yet many are just thus unscientific and unfair in assuming to be capable of an intelligent judgment regarding spiritual realities, though they confess that they never honestly attempted to learn of Christ concerning His acknowledged specialty. Let science be fair enough to condemn all such as manifestly unscientific and therefore unworthy of confidence or endorsement in this matter.

Christ's attitude strictly scientific.

It necessarily follows that the only leaders of the religious life who are worthy of the following of intelligent men are those who have earnestly striven to their utmost to know the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. In so far as this truth is found elsewhere in the world, its place is secure, but no time need be consumed in seeking light from others except as they point to Him, for His place is conceded to be the highest of all the specialists in character. There-

fore when Prof. Tyndall, a student in physical science, and confessing himself to have neglected the spiritual realities, assumes to put forth an essay on *Prayer,* he does the most unscientific thing he could do, and the thinking world must recognize his utter incompetency to deal with the subject. When, however, a contemporary of Prof. Tyndall, Mr. D. L. Moody, publishes an essay on *Prevailing Prayer,* the thinking world, knowing his long experience in the prayer-life, must accord to the author the right to a respectful hearing, for, if it be scientific, it will say he has a right to be heard. Prof. Tyndall could tell Mr. Moody some wonderful facts about Biology; but no less surely could Mr. Moody tell Prof. Tyndall some facts just as remarkable about prayer. There are college professors who can teach their students about some specialty in which they have real experience, who are not competent to discuss the realities of the Christian life.

The only worthy leaders in religion.

The fact remains that many men are not willing to face the truth which bears upon life and character. They have not the courage of their conviction in the matter of following Jesus Christ. It is time to make it plain that all such are not scientific, are not honest, are not deserving of self-respect. Does this statement seem severe? It is not unjustly severe, for it is true. If their course be intentionally unscientific, it is not honest, and therefore cannot

be worthy of respect. Let us encourage every man who urges honest investigation without reserve. But let this investigation seek that end which alone justifies it, namely truth that will make for character. When men stop short of this ultimate, they betray actual insincerity in their aim. Truth realizes its end only when it obtains in real life.

Many unwilling to face the truth.

Any one who has much to do with the students in the colleges in America and other countries knows that many of them are unsettled in their attitude toward truth because of the methods of instruction pursued by their professors. These men claim to be scientific, and yet often put forth assumptions as if they were facts, ignoring related considerations which tend to balance and steady the susceptible minds of the students. The result is that some institutions are destructive in the total effect of their teaching because they give points of view in the narrow lines of different specialties, without giving the right proportion of truth, or taking care to buttress the inquirer against unbalanced and perverting instruction. Men will say they are set to teach their specialty, but the total effect of the system is unworthy of great institutions whose first claim is that they aim to build true manhood in rounded character. In order to safeguard the students against this hurtful method it is necessary to warn them not to forget that

Lack of true proportion in much college teaching.

there is a proper balance of the truth, and if their teachers do not give it to them, there is a place to find it. Knowing as they do the supreme importance of character, let them find in Christ, that greatest of all specialists in the realm of truest realities, the truth which will steady the whole life, the truth that makes men free.

Out of all the foregoing considerations we must draw the conclusion that the man who is an honest follower of Jesus Christ, with the supreme desire to possess a character like Christ's, is the most scientific of men. For he is striving to learn both truth and life from the greatest of all teachers, by which he shall grow into that spiritual discernment of the deep realities of the spiritual life which will enable him to know Christ, even as Aristotle knew Plato, even as Kepler knew Copernicus, even as Gray knew Linnæus, even as Raphael knew Michelangelo, even as Beethoven knew Bach, even as Paul and Luther and Livingstone knew Christ. This is to carry research into the deepest capacities of the human soul, along the line of the loftiest aspirations of the immortal spirit, out into the life where the relations with men summon to effort and growth. This is the most real and the most valuable experience a man can know. It is worthy of his truest endeavor, of his unflinching fidelity to the truth, of the fullest consecration of his best life.

An honest Christian the most scientifc of men.

The aim of this book is to point the way to a clear faith in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men. Every part of the discussion is intended to contribute to that end. It is a whole salvation which is considered not merely the escape from sin; but also the service of a loving allegiance which seeks to live Christ and give Christ to every man in the earth.

The aim of this book.

Therefore it is not intended to try to satisfy mere curiosity about mysteries; but to show the way to secure a character which reveals the deep realities of a genuine spiritual life at its best. Let this aim be kept in mind. We shall ever seek to show the reasonableness of the faith which is worthy of a Christian, but back of the response of the reason to these considerations let there be the real purpose to know Christ in order to possess a character like His.

The seeker after truth must ask himself as to his real purpose in life. His right attitude is vital, for he cannot be true without it. Unless a man desires character with increasing intensity, he cannot shake off prejudices, even in the face of manifest truth. Unless a man is ready to follow the light with the quick courage of conviction, he is a slave to some sort of selfish fear, because the straightforward assertion of his new conviction will cost something which he is not willing to pay. For such there can be no real progress in the truth, and therefore no true growth in character.

The right attitude of the true seeker after truth.

Consistent with what has been said, all our study of the subjects which follow will be with the aim ever before us to realize how the truth counts in its effect upon character. By that test its value appears. Accordingly whatever other source of information we may seek, we shall always turn for our final authority to Christ, our greatest specialist, in order to learn His estimate of the teaching. He always reveals its relation to character, and therefore in Him we learn its final value. To this study let us go with open minds and honest hearts, seeking the truth not simply for its own sake, but that we may know its power in that character which is everywhere proving the salvation of the individual who possesses it, and which is therefore the hope of the race.

The final resort to Christ.

SCIENTIFIC FAITH.

II.

SCIENTIFIC FAITH.

A scientific definition of faith will make it clear that it is not something restricted to the religious realm, but is found in every department of human knowledge. Faith is a reasonable inference from accepted facts. Faith is not credulity. A strange misconception has sometimes obtained to the effect that reason and faith are antagonistic, and when reason enters faith departs. Nothing is further from the truth. Faith is the result of reasoning from accepted facts concerning that which is not yet known. In view of this process it is counted reasonable to believe certain things consistent with the facts, but transcending experience. Therefore we have essentially the same definition which is given us in Hebrews 11:1, which may be translated from the Greek thus: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." This definition puts the element of confidence into the inference, and colors it with that same hope which every seeker after knowledge and certainty entertains in all his efforts to push a little further into the unknown. In the realm of per-

A scientific definition of faith.

sonal relations faith takes on the form of trust. The principle is the same. It is believing in a man because of the facts which one knows about him and which justify the confidence. When a man says he believes in Jesus Christ, and trusts Him, the principle is identical. If facts justify the confidence it is a reasonable faith.

It is the scientific method which thus proceeds from certain accepted facts to set up an hypothesis, an inference, a belief concerning the probabilities about something not yet known. Faith is simply the working hypothesis upon which the student proceeds in his investigations. All progress is being made by thus advancing a hypothesis and testing it.

Faith a working hypothesis.

When the effort to make progress ceases, it is because faith is dead, and no working hypothesis is being any longer utilized. This method of research is in use in every department of knowledge in the effort to know more. All the physical sciences are full of a gigantic faith which is being exercised in accepting various hypotheses, inferences, believing them to be most probable, for they are the best inferences which reason suggests in view of accepted facts. And this is exactly the character of the Christian's faith. It is because of certain facts that the Christian believes; and reason justifies the faith as the most reasonable in view of the character of the facts.

The physical sciences are developed on the basis

of the atomic theory. Now the definition of an atom tells us it is "an invisible, indivisible particle of matter." That is to say, it is a particle of matter so small that we cannot see it and cannot cut it in two. But the human mind cannot conceive of anything so small but what we could cut it in two, and it would be just half as large. This means that the human mind is finite and must rest this side of the infinitesimal, as well as this side of the infinite. We cannot imagine the end of space. But science must begin with some sort of hypothesis, and therefore begins with the atom. True, leading scientists differ in their idea about the atom, but they realize the necessity of believing something in order to proceed in their investigations. The very important fact connected with this faith in the atom is that man, as at present constituted, can only know in part. Therefore the assumption of intellectual sufficiency is unbecoming. The truly great men among our leading scientists speak with hesitation about certainty of knowledge. It is the superficial student who boasts without hesitation. In view of the facts thus recognized, the place of faith becomes apparent.

The faith of science in the atomic theory.

Conviction concerning this necessity of faith is strengthened by some further important considerations. Explanation involves superiority to the thing explained. The fact needs only to be stated in order to be recognized as true. But there is much

on every side which transcends human knowledge. The thoughtful student will ever recognize his limitations. Man's attempt to explain that which transcends is simply the expression of his aspiration. Moreover we have come to realize that when we study the progress of created things, we must interpret the lower in terms of the higher. That which is below finds its true meaning in view of its relation to that which is above. For man therefore to assume to interpret fully that which transcends the human is contrary to the recognized procedure and unscientific. He may believe about it reasonably, in view of what he does know; but he cannot know it fully.

Explanation means superiority.

It follows inevitably that if man is ever to have an intelligent and adequate appreciation of the meaning of human life itself, to say nothing of the life which transcends the human as now restricted, he must be given a revelation from above. He must be taught the truth from a point of view which transcends his own. Since the uniformity of law is everywhere maintained, man must be interpreted in view of his relation to that which is above man. In order to realize this relation sufficiently to grow toward his natural destiny, he must be enabled to see how the things which baffle his understanding now have a relation to a process which becomes clear from that superior level of vision. It would be exactly in

Therefore man must have

accord with our scientific procedure if one superior to man should come and teach us concerning that which is beyond our knowledge, and reveal to us enough of truth to enable us to interpret life on the human level in terms of a higher life. In the succeeding chapters we shall note the reasons for believing that such a revelation has been given to men. At this point we must see, not only how it is made necessary by man's limitations, but also how it is thoroughly scientific to believe in such a revelation, if man shall develop intelligently toward a higher life, in harmony with all development everywhere.

a revelation of the truth which transcends human knowledge.

Another important consideration in this connection is that we may be certain of some things though we cannot fully comprehend them. For instance, our reason will not allow us to doubt the evidence of cause and effect. Now human consciousness is an effect, but that necessarily means that the cause of the human personality is of the nature of conscious personality. The stream does not rise higher than its source. Moreover the continued existence of the world is the basis for the conviction that it has a sufficient reason for existence. Other things come and go, but the world remains. An equilibrium is maintained. Things are not unbalanced. There is manifest a deeper harmony sustained beneath the surface of discords. This points to a

Faith in a causal reality.

ruler of the world who has not lost His power. This is a fact of importance for the preliminary preparation of the attitude of faith in the general condition of things, though many mysteries touch them.

It has been noted in the previous chapter that some men who claim to be scientific are not because they ignore some of the facts. The case of Prof. Romanes was cited. So long as he ignored the facts and forces in the spiritual realm, it was impossible for him to have a scientific faith about them. He could not use a working hypothesis concerning them. But when he began to study them fully, earnestly, he came to a strong scientific faith in Jesus Christ. Christ has given us light upon most important facts, which we cannot understand apart from His teachings. Christ brings all those facts into the range of a reasonable faith which are so impossible for mere human wisdom to comprehend. It is this very contribution which He gives to the solution of human problems that explains the great satisfaction which accompanies intelligent faith in Him. It cannot be denied that the men of little faith and of no faith are those who have not taken all the facts into the account in the light of the teachings of Christ. His character is back of His teachings, as the mightiest fact in human history. Men who ignore Him have not been true to the full claim of the truth upon them.

All facts necessary to the clearest faith.

We have also referred to the broad-minded view

of any great problem as involving this same study of all the facts which we recognize as related to it. Such a view is necessary for a victorious faith. If any important fact be left out, sooner or later, faith will cease to be clear and strong, as questions concerning that neglected fact will arise. But when every known fact has been related to all the other known facts, faith is based upon the broadest possible foundation. Now this is true of the Christian's faith. He has taken all the known facts into account, and has light upon them from the world's greatest Teacher. Nothing is evaded, but everything is related to the system of truth, with a reasonable explanation sufficient to justify the faith. Therefore this faith of the Christian shines bright and undimmed through the years. Nothing threatens its strength.

Strong faith must be broad-minded.

Another fact, sometimes forgotten, the appreciation of which is necessary to scientific faith, is the reality of the unseen psychical and spiritual world. Prof. James reminds us that an object may be present to our thought as really as to our senses. The appreciation of the nature and reality of justice may be as keen to the moral consciousness as the appreciation of hardness in the stone to the sense of touch. A spiritual vision of the beauty of holiness is as real as a physical vision of the beauty of the landscape. Prof. James truly says "these feelings

The reality of the unseen.

are as convincing to those who have them as direct sensible experiences can be; and they are, as a rule, much more convincing than results established by mere logic ever are." We must keep this truth in mind as we discuss realities in the realm of faith and the religious life, invisible to the eye of the flesh, but clearly realized by the inner consciousness.

One of the most important elements in a scientific faith is the appreciation of the fact that any conceptions man may have of God must be anthropomorphic. Some men speak of this fact as if it must condemn all such conceptions of God as hopelessly inadequate. We have noted that much in the universe transcends human knowledge. But whatever man knows at all he must know as a man, and all his conceptions must be marked by human limitations. A man must think humanly of a dog, not as the dog thinks of itself. Just so he must think humanly of God, not as God thinks of Himself. The moment we try to get beyond such human conceptions, that moment we have lost the sense of reality in thinking of God, for our conception has no definite character remaining, and eludes us in a hazy generality. Let us have done with the superficial notion that anthropomorphism is to be decried. The more that God's humanity is apparent to us, the more we realize the perfection of His character and the reality of a possi-

The unreasonable objection to anthropomorphic conceptions of God.

ble vital fellowship with Him. The necessity for such a conception of God is the fundamental explanation of the fact that the incarnation of Christ must be adapted to human limitations. Thus only can a revelation of God be made to men. We shall refer again to this fact in considering the incarnation of Christ. At this point let us realize that we must not only think of the God-likeness of Christ, but also of the Christ-likeness of God.

A great stumbling block in the way of faith has been the mistaken supposition, entertained by many, that the intellect is the only organ of evidence to the man. This was the mistake made by Romanes for years. His intellect was his god. He imagined he could not believe any thing which he could not demonstrate to be true by an intellectual process. But he tells us how great was his astonishment one day to discover that the affections, the feelings, and the will are also organs of evidence to the man. It flashed upon him in this form, "I know that my mother loves me, but I cannot prove it by logic." We feel some realities, especially in the realm of personal relationships. Herbert Spencer confessed in his last book that he had paid too little heed to the feelings as organs of evidence to men. So the will is a factor in this acquisition of knowledge by experience. If a certain product involves the relation of a man's will to that of another, the process leading to that product brings the will into

The organs of evidence.

the conscious experience as a factor. So if my right relation to Jesus Christ requires a definite relation of my will to His, that will becomes an organ of evidence as I experience the result of the fellowship which follows.

We have spoken of a gigantic faith in the realm of the physical sciences. It is important to realize the relative reliability of the faith of the scientists and that of the Christian. The physicist tells us how many tons of copper are necessary to condense a cubic foot of ether a fraction of an inch. No one ever tried it. The scientists are not all agreed about the ether. This inference is not a matter of experimental knowledge. The astronomer tells us that light travels at the rate of ninety-six thousand miles a second, and that, at that rate, the light of the north star requires thirty-nine years to reach our globe. The geologists tell us the formation of the earth has required from three millions to fifty millions of years. No two of them exactly agree. Yet the students of science accept these statements, these beliefs, because these teachers point out certain facts which lead them to believe they are making reasonable inferences from the same. It is a matter of faith, reasonable more or less, scientific in principle, still simple faith.

The faith which scientists have in their teachings.

Lord Salisbury, as president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, said in his annual address at Oxford in 1894, that instead of re-

counting the triumphs of science, he deemed it wise to note some of the marks of our ignorance, some of the unsolved enigmas which still baffle us. Then this great statesman and scientist pointed out in scientific detail the great uncertainty attaching to almost every theory thus far advanced by physical science, and declared that the theory of evolution was being now assumed as a working hypothesis, not because it was proven by any means, but because there were fewer objections and difficulties attending it than any other. All of which goes to emphasize the large place given to faith in every department of physical science. It is necessary there, as a working hypothesis, in order to progress, just as it is scientific and necessary in every department of knowledge and life.

Lord Salisbury on the failures of science.

Yet when a man rises to testify to the incontrovertible fact that the most real experience in all his life is the consciousness of the power of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ to transform his character, to satisfy his loftiest aspirations, to strengthen, enrich and sweeten his life, many of these same scientists smile incredulously as if the man were not quite responsible. But this man is a leader in his community, his word is as good as his bond, his judgment in affairs of finance, or the affairs of state, is counted profound and of great value. In fact the vast majority of the world's greatest scientists give this testimony themselves. If there be any con-

Faith in the testimony of the Christian.

sistency in the scientific method, it must be frankly conceded that the Christian is equally scientific with other men in his faith. Indeed since science demands the reality of experience for a basis, then the Christian is the most scientific of all, because his experience is the most vital in the whole range of the human consciousness. Not only so, but the product of his process of faith is worth more to the world than any derived from other spheres of activity.

If therefore the student in the class room believes the teacher who declares that he has proved his statement by personal experiment in the laboratory, though the student himself has had no such experience, no man can deny the equally reasonable attitude of one seeking to know the solution of the problem of character, when such an inquirer listens with an open mind to a witness whose veracity is not to be questioned as he declares, just as does the professor, that he knows his statement to be true because he has proved it in the laboratory of an honest experience in the daily life. In fact it is just because earnest students see and feel the reality of this experience in the lives of some with whom they come into contact, that they cannot doubt the truth of Christian testimony. One manifest fact is worth a thousand arguments.

The testimony of experience the basis of scientific faith.

Furthermore the universal testimony of human

experience establishes the fact that faith is the explanation of all human progress, the vital essential to worthy achievement in every sphere of activity. Only the man who believes accomplishes. To the old adage "seeing is believing" we must put another, "believing is seeing." It was the faith of Alexander and Cæsar and Napoleon which conquered worlds and built empires. It was the faith of Columbus that discovered a new continent. It was the faith of Marconi that gave us wireless telegraphy. Faith has been the explanation of the tireless devotion and patient enthusiasm of all those men who saw from afar the consummation. Therefore when Jesus Christ emphasizes the necessity of faith among those who would follow Him in building character and redeeming the race, He only stipulates a condition which is everywhere demanded of heroic service. And to say that true faith here will involve self-denial and tireless energy is only to say what every sphere of life demands of the victors therein. "The just shall live by faith" not only in the realm of religion, but in every realm. The moment faith ceases, the cause begins to die.

Faith an essential in every sphere of achievement.

Glance over the marginal notes of this chapter again to recall the salient considerations which enter into the study of a scientific faith. In addition to what has been said, it is necessary to appreciate the truth that the faith which involves spiritual realities must be distinctive in character, though in accord

The distinctive phase of the Christian's faith.

with universal principles. The faith which Christ asserts it necessary for men who are to build Christian character to possess must rest upon certain facts in the experience of the individual in view of his relation to Jesus Christ. These facts we are about to consider in the succeeding chapters. They are facts which, if fairly faced, must compel assent to the reasonableness of the faith in God, in the Bible, in Christ Himself as the only Saviour of men, and in the inevitable triumph of Christianity as the universal religion.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN GOD.

III.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN GOD.

No leader of the world's thought ranks higher in the realm of science than Lord Kelvin. And no utterance from this man of great authority has been counted more significant than that spoken in the University College in April, 1903. Lord Kelvin said: "Science positively affirms creative power. It is not in dead matter that we live and move and have our being, but in the creating and directing Power which science compels us to accept as an article of belief. We cannot escape from that conclusion when we study the physics and dynamics of living and dead matter all around.—We only know God in His works, but we are absolutely forced by science to believe with perfect confidence in a Directive Power, in an influence other than physical, or dynamical, or electrical forces.—There is nothing between absolute scientific belief in a Creative Power, and the acceptance of the theory of a fortuitous concourse of atoms.—Modern scientific men are in agreement in condemning the latter as utterly absurd in respect to the coming into existence. or

Lord Kelvin on the teaching of science concerning a creative power.

the growth, or the continuation of molecular combinations presented in the bodies of living things. Here scientific thought is compelled to accept the idea of Creative Power. Forty years ago I asked Liebig, walking somewhere in the country, if he believed that the grass and flowers that we saw around us grew by mere chemical forces. He answered, 'No, no more than I could believe that a book of Botany describing them could grow by mere chemical forces.' Every action of free will is a miracle to physical and chemical and mathematical science.—Do not be afraid of being free thinkers. If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to the belief in God, which is the foundation of all religion. You will find science not antagonistic but helpful to religion."

Kelvin's quotation from Liebig.

This utterance of one who is probably the greatest living scientist of our time should be studied with great care, especially by those who have been unduly influenced by men of smaller calibre. In the address by Lord Salisbury, previously mentioned, we have the following words: "I feel profoundly convinced that the argument from design has been greatly too much lost sight of in recent zoological speculations. Overwhelmingly strong proofs of intelligent and benevolent design lie around us, and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them

Salisbury's statement on the same subject.

for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us through nature the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living things depend on an everlasting Creator and Ruler." Darwin himself, in the first edition of his "Origin of Species," said, "To my mind it accords better with what we know of the *laws impressed on matter by the Creator*, that the production and extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should have been due to secondary causes like those determining the birth and death of the individual." This recognition by Darwin of the Creator working through nature's laws should not be forgotten.

We shall speak of this "everlasting Creator and Ruler" as God. Science has taught us the solidarity of the universe, the uniformity of law, and the unity of force as related to the phenomena about us. Prof. Romanes pointed to the fact that science has made polytheism impossible to educated men. There can be but one God according to the evidence which science presents. Moreover the old idea of deism, which thought of God as starting the worlds going and then withdrawing Himself, must be abandoned, for science insists upon the immanence of God in all nature. And nature, as we have noted, includes human nature. Therefore we need waste no time in considering various theories and superstitions concerning gods many, but will confine our thought to the inquiry as to

The teaching of science concerning God.

the reasonableness of believing in one true God.

We may follow the argument of Lord Kelvin and Lord Salisbury as to the evidence from design a little further. Consider an old hall clock yonder in the stairway. Its ticking pendulum, its hour and minute and second hands all move with perfect accuracy in their proper places. Its mimic moon shows the exact phase of the moon in the heavens at the moment when it is observed. Another indicator points to the day of the month, following the round of the entire year with unvarying precision. Now if you were to ask any intelligent man whether this clock just made itself, with its delicate adjustments and skilful arrangements, by a series of chance meetings of atoms, he would quickly repudiate the thought with a suspicion regarding your sanity. But as we look at the great clocks of the ages, moving with marvelous precision through the heavens we behold the wonders of a geometry before which human clock-makers stand amazed, and which they have copied just a little bit.

An illustration of the evidence of design.

The science of Mathematics is the one deemed most certain in its conclusions. There is a department of Mathematics known as the Science of Probabilities. If you consider the various combinations and adjustments of the human eye, and calculate the probability of such a product being by chance, the absurdity of such an idea appears when we determine the probability of

The science of

its ever occurring more than once. The science of Probabilities proves the chances are a million to one against such a repetition. Yet when we consider the reproduction, not only of the human eye, but of the whole mechanism of the human body, this science positively compels us to repudiate a view of creation which ignores the necessity of an intelligent Creator.

Probabilities demands design in creation.

The thinking world recognizes Immanuel Kant as one of the most profound minds among the intellectual giants of the centuries. He says "It is impossible to contemplate the fabric of the world without recognizing the certain manifestation of the hand of God in the perfection of its correlations. Reason, when once it has considered and admired so much beauty and so much perfection, feels a just indignation at the dauntless folly which dares to ascribe all this to chance and a happy accident. It must be that the highest wisdom conceived the plan and infinite power carried it into execution. All things which set forth reciprocal harmonies in nature must be bound together in a single Existence on which they collectively depend. Thus there exists a Being of all beings, an infinite Understanding and a self-existent Wisdom, from which nature, in the whole aggregate of her correlations, derives existence. It is not allowable to maintain that the activity of nature is prejudicial to the existence of

Immanual Kant on the evidence of God in the universe.

a Highest Being. The perfection of its development the order and harmony of its laws give conclusive demonstration of the Godhead from whom these relations are derived."

Let us next turn to another of our greatest living scientists, as he leads us a step further in our inquiry. Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace divides the honors with Mr. Darwin as a student of living species. In one particular he departs from Darwin's theory of natural selection, namely in his view of the creation of man. He insists that man never could have been produced by this evolutionary process, without a special intervention on the part of the Creator. In his work on *Natural Selection* he says:—"Force is the product of mind. All force is probably will-force. If will is anything, it is a power that directs the action of forces stored up in the body, and it is not conceivable that this direction can take place without the exercise of some force in some part of the organism. If, therefore, we have traced one force, however minute, to its origin in our will, while we have no knowledge of any other primary cause of force, it does not seem an improbable conclusion that all force may be will-force; and thus that the whole universe is not merely dependent on, but actually is, the will of higher intelligences, or of one Supreme Intelligence."

Alfred Russell Wallace on the evidence of will-power in creation.

The next step in our inquiry goes deeper. We

have indicated the facts which compel a scientific belief in God as an intelligent Creator who manifests powers of mind and will. We noted in a former chapter that Prof. Romanes, after years of neglect of man as a part of nature, began the study of human nature. The science of Biology had emphasized to the mind of this great specialist the place and importance of instinct in animal life. This instinct always pointed to something which satisfied that in the creature which gave rise to it. One of the most important facts in human nature which commanded the attention of Romanes was the religious instinct. But since science teaches the uniformity of all law, therefore the biologist who is to continue to be scientific must believe that religious instinct in man points to something which satisfies that in the man which gave rise to it. Just as the presence of the will in human nature points to the will of the Creator, so the presence of the religious nature, the moral consciousness in man, points to the moral nature of God. Let us realize fully the scientific character of this belief.

Romanes on the moral nature of God.

That notable leader of the Brahmo Somaj of India, Mr. P. C. Mozoomdar, has given expression to this consciousness in the human race of its religious nature. He says: "The fact of life and its expanding domain is a mystery as obstinate as it is aggressive. It is there undoubtedly: the sense of it haunts us from without,

Mozoomdar on

man's religious nature.

from within, around, above, in matter, in mind, in the highest and subtlest forms of the spirit of man.—We love and pray for it. The prayer is wrung out from a craving of what is deepest and inmost within us. The deepest blessing is the growing manifestation and presence and continuance of life in me, in all beings that relate to me. God is life. As a living Being God abides, in my body as the sum of energy, in my spirit as the deeper spirit, at once the essence of all things and qualities of this manifold universe. But what is a living Spirit, the source and secret of all living spirits, without a personality, without a moral character? I have known and felt in this life of mine that I live in the Spirit of God. If this deepest life of profoundest consciousness in me is a lie, then the abyss of that lie swallows me, and there is an end of reason, sentiment, morality and everything."

Every honest, earnest man is compelled to subscribe to that description of the yearnings of the human soul, in view of the instinctive assertion of the religious nature. Let us recall the statement of Prof. James regarding the reality of the unseen, and the fact that such experiences as these carry a conviction as to their reality which is more convincing than could be secured by any process of logic. In the correspondence of that man of clear, strong mind, Mr. James Russell Lowell, we have the following

James Russell Lowell on the conscious

statement: "I had a vision last Friday evening. I never before so clearly felt the Spirit of God in me and around me. The whole room seemed to me full of God. The air seemed to waver to and fro with the presence of something I knew not what. I spoke with the calmness and clearness of a prophet." These are but echoes of Paul's statement to the Athenians concerning Him whom they worshipped as the Unknown God, "In Him we live and move and have our being; for we are His offspring." (Acts 17:28.)

presence of God.

With the appreciation of the moral nature of God we must also see how all nature teaches us that God is love. As we study the character of all law, we learn that every law of nature is a good law. Its obedience always brings blessings. Only when law is violated or ignored do the calamities and ills of life appear. That is to say, love is manifest in all law. The penalty which follows the violation of law is its necessary defense. The law of purity is only maintained by the love of purity, and that love must be a burning flame against impurity evermore. The law of health can only realize its precious fruits as its violations are accompanied by warnings and penalties, in heeding which men shall ultimately learn to develop buoyant vitality, wholesome sanitation and clean living. Love of health must maintain the penalty of the violated law, until men learn to obey it and secure its blessings. We will consider

Nature teaches the love of God.

the problem of evil in the next chapter, but at this point let us realize the great teaching in all the laws of nature as clearly pointing to the benevolence of the Creator and Ruler of the world.

Let us now approach the subject from another point of view. The science of psychology has taught us the necessity of self-revelation of spirit. The demonstration of this teaching as in human experience. In a cradle yonder you see a body, but see no motion and hear no sound. You are led to conclude it is a dead body, for there is no evidence of the presence of animate life. If, however, you perceive motion and sound, you are prepared to believe there is a little animal in the cradle. In time the little fellow gives evidence of intelligence, and you say he is a bright boy. Or it may be that you note signs of mental aberration, and are compelled to believe the boy is an idiot. This is simply because of the character of the evidence which appears to show the nature of the spirit within. So as the boy grows to be a man, people believe in the presence and power of his spirit because of his self-revelation of his manner of life and quality of character, in the product of his genius or in his influence among men. Whatever comes out in the self-revelation of spirit determines our belief in the reality of the spirit's presence and power. The spirit is invisible and intangible to the physical senses, but holds communion with other spirits like unto himself,

The self revelation of spirit necessary.

through physical media. Moreover this realm of the invisible spirit is counted the realm of the vital realities in human life. A man will sometimes say, "I have a soul"; whereas he should say, "I am a soul: I have a body."

Exactly thus do we behold the facts in the creation and maintenance of the worlds which compel the belief in the mighty Spirit of whom we speak as the Creator and Ruler of the same. All the evidences of the presence and power of an intelligent Being, to which Lord Kelvin, Immanuel Kant, and others refer, are simply the manifestations of the self-revelation of the eternal Spirit whom we call God. Whatever has come out in nature is simply the revelation of His nature, made evident by the character of His plan and power in the world. The fact that He is invisible as Spirit is no more mysterious than the fact that every man is invisible as spirit. But just as the presence and power of the unseen human spirit cannot be doubted because of the evidences which appear, so the evidences in the realm of visible phenomena point with imperative, compelling conviction to the existence of the invisible God, the Maker and Ruler of all things.

The self-revelation of God.

We must note one special fact in this connection. Since all that has appeared in nature points to the nature of God, we are concerned to study any manifestation in nature which reveals qualities in the character of God beyond those which we have noted

thus far. At the crown of all nature we find human nature, and in the realm of man's life we find the fact of fatherhood. This can only mean one thing concerning God. Fatherhood in creation compels belief in fatherhood in the Creator. The logic of the argument is clear. The fact of fatherhood in creation, with its love, its care, its control, reveals the Fatherhood of God as necessary in the nature of things. It could not be in creation if it were not in the Creator. Therefore the scientific belief in God can be nothing less than the belief in Him as our Father in the heavens, who loves and cares for us even as an earthly father, but with infinitely greater wisdom and love, revealed in all His laws and in His gifts of life and blessings to men.

The Fatherhood of God revealed in nature.

Therefore when Jesus Christ pointed men, who had lost the true conception of God, to the truth of the Fatherhood of God, He was not only revealing the most profound truth in itself, for the inspiration and the redemption of men unto God; but He was also thoroughly scientific. It was in the nature of things that the Creator should reveal His character in His creation, and at the top of that creation the fatherhood of man evermore points to the divine Fatherhood in the Creator. Men had lost sight of this fact, and in their conception of God had grown far away from the sense of His immanence in His world, and

Christ's teaching concerning the Fatherhood of God scientific.

from the idea that He is an abiding presence among men, immediately concerned about us, caring for us and anxious to be a Father to us. Nothing less could be true of a father. It was Christ who brought to men this age-long, but forgotten truth of the Fatherhood of God.

But here, as in all our study, we must not forget that the spiritual discernment is necessary to a living realization of God's Fatherhood. That spiritual discernment can only come from a spiritual experience of the truth. If we should see a child looking longingly through a telescope to see God among the stars, we would smile. But why? Because we realize that back of the Creator and Ruler, whose plan and power in the universe are made manifest by the revelations of the telescope, there is a quality in the being of God not visible to the eye of flesh. It is a moral quality visible only to the eye of the spirit, nay only to the vision of the spiritual man who has cultivated that vision. Therefore it is that when some men have done the very thing which causes us to smile at the child, reporting that they cannot find the God of love, we know just why they have failed. This vision is not found through the telescope, but through the eye of the soul. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," are the words of our Christ, our Master-specialist. This purity of heart means at bottom absolute sincerity with God and men.

The spiritual vision of God.

Just here is the difficulty with many in the matter

of believing in God. Very few doubt the evidence of a Creator and Ruler of the world; but they are slow to believe in His love as the divine Father of men. We have pointed out the necessity of recognizing all law as proving the love of God because of the blessings that follow their obedience. And we have just seen how we are compelled to believe in the Fatherhood of God because it is manifest in the nature of the creation. Our problem therefore is to discover how the love of our Father in the heavens, in which we must believe, could allow mankind to experience such suffering as marks human history. We have pointed out the fact that this problem must be approached at the point where the love of purity must maintain the law of purity by inflicting the penalty which follows its disobedience. We shall deal with this question in the discussion of the subject of character, but just here it is important to realize a vital fact about the character of those who do believe in the love of God. The sincerity of heart which gives a vision of God is one of the conditions to that spiritual discernment which we noted in the first chapter as being strictly scientific. Some people do not understand it any more than they understand musical discernment. But many possess it and are conscious of its blessings in their lives, and of the light which it sheds on this subject of the scientific belief in the love of God. This sincerity does not simply pretend to be concerned about the

How can a God of love allow human suffering?

world's suffering, when pointing to it as a reason for not believing in the love of God; but sees that God's love is in all nature, with healing potency, and above all in Jesus Christ with redeeming grace.

Consider this difference. George Eliot was a brilliant novelist, but her unbelief created an atmosphere chill and unhealthy. She declared that she could not believe in a God of love who would allow such sin and misery in the world. But what kind of real concern did she have? None. She sat by, doing nothing to help better the situation. A selfish heart blinded the intellect, and the vision of God could not be seen. George MacDonald was just as brilliant a novelist as George Eliot. He too saw the sin and suffering of men, but his heart leaped in a great love to win them from their sin, and relieve their suffering. He tells us he learned this love for men from Jesus Christ and found it blessed. One thing George MacDonald preached to the world as being the thing of which he was certain, whatever else he might doubt: that was the love of God. It was this message which brought hope and comfort and a mighty power to save the men to whom he ministered amidst their pitiful conditions of weakness and sorrow and sin.

Those who see God's love in a world of suffering.

No man took upon his heart the sin and sorrow of a suffering world as did Jesus Christ. He gave His life to heal and help it. Yet no man saw the love of God so fully as did Jesus Christ. We have said the

only hope of the world is a Teacher whose philosophy of life is broad enough to include both of these facts. Both are evident. God's love is proved in God's law. We must see love in the world as surely as we see sin and suffering. He who would exclude either in his attempt to solve life's problem has failed. Jesus Christ alone of all the teachers of men shows us, as men who know both of these facts, how to believe in the loving Fatherhood of God. The Schopenhauers nurse pessimism in intellectual darkness because there are mysteries which they cannot solve, and refuse to accept the facts which touch those mysteries. We have shown this method unscientific. It has no ray of hope for the world. The Booths organize the Salvation Army and take the sin and suffering, with all its mystery, on their hearts of love, glorifying the most blessed fact in the world, that there is a love which has brought us the power which saves from sin, and brings peace to men. It is manifest which of these have the vision of God. The light of His love shines upon the way where they hasten, and men thank God for their coming.

Christ brings the love of God to suffering men.

We have spoken of the broad-minded people and those of a narrow view. That narrow view which cannot see the love of God in the world has only a Gospel of despair for men. It sees no light in the darkness, no comfort for the sorrowing, no victory over sin. It has never helped the world onward one inch in all the centuries. The broad-minded view

takes every fact into the account, and is therefore the only scientific view. It sees God, the loving Father in the heavens, at once maintaining His righteous laws, and striving with divine patience and love to redeem the men who violate them in wilful or ignorant sin. This view relates every difficulty in the problem to its proper place, and out of it all has a vision of God which is the world's joy and the world's hope. It is this scientific belief in God which is the hope of mankind. It is a most important fact to remember that the vast majority of the men whose lives reveal the strength of true character the world over thus believe in God, through the fulness of the teaching of Jesus Christ.

This scientific belief in God the only reasonable hope for mankind.

THE
SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN CHARACTER.

IV.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN CHARACTER.

Our study now turns to man, the crown of the earthly creation. It is our purpose to consider at once that sphere of human life which is distinctive of man. In his *Data of Ethics,* Mr. Spencer suggests that we are accustomed to call anything a success or a failure, according as it accomplishes that which its form of construction shows what its maker intended it to be or to do. For instance, an umbrella shows by its form of construction that its maker intended it to keep off the rain. It may be used as a cane, or to ornament the wall; but if it will not keep off the rain, it is a failure as an umbrella.

Man's distinctive realm of character.

Let us follow this suggestion. If we should see several machines with much in common, but each having a distinctive feature, one a rake, another a knife, etc., we would instantly say the maker intended each machine to accomplish its distinctive work in connection with its knife, or rake.

Applying these tests to man, we rise immediately to the realm of the moral and spiritual life, and say it is evident from the constitution of the human being that the Maker intended man to realize his dis-

tinctive development in this realm of the spiritual life in the making of character. All his powers of intellect, affections and will converge toward this realization in the manifest purpose of God. Prof. St. George Mivart says man is further above the ape than the ape is above the blade of grass. John Fiske likewise declares that we must divide the universe, putting man on one side and all else on the other. These men point out that evolution henceforth has no need of further physical development, since all progress must now be through the psychical, and "organic evolution gives place to civilization for the perfecting of man." We touch the heart of the truth when we say no creature below man ever hungered after righteousness, while no man can ever be truly satisfied with anything else.

Man's spiritual superiority.

What now must we say of the men who do not realize the plan and purpose of God for them? Some manage to be a tailor's model, actually measuring manhood by millinery—a necktie! Some achieve splendid physical development. They measure manhood by muscle. This is their world, where the animal is all. Some cultivate a pleasing address and attractive appearance. They measure manhood by manners. Some amass wealth, sufficient to fill their graves. They measure manhood by money. To them a man's bank account is really the index of what he is worth to the world. Some develop masterful intellects, running the gamut

The measure of

of the world's thought. They measure manhood by mind. This is the world of reality and satisfaction for them. Some rise still higher and insist upon honesty in business, kindness in dealing with their fellows, fidelity and consideration and generosity in the home life, a high moral standard. They measure manhood by morals. **manhood.**

Now all these elements enter into a rounded manhood and have relative values, but they are not all, nor enough. Though a man have all these, if he should fail to rise to the plane of realizing his spiritual possibilities, knowing his relation to God, building character as the exponent of the eternal life, though his name be written high on the scroll of fame; yet across the record of his career it must be written—*But he was a failure as an immortal soul.* Some men measure manhood by the man Christ Jesus, and for such the fulness of the stature of the perfect man is in Him. Says Fiske:—"Toward the spiritual perfection of humanity the stupendous momentum of the cosmic forces has all along been tending." It is Paul's thought when he says the destiny which God's plan has for man is that he "should be conformed to the image of His Son," and the Son is "the express image of the Father." We are again facing the fact that our greatest Specialist in character is the only one in whom perfect manhood is revealed to the human race. **Perfection of character in Christ.**

But as men measure themselves by Him, this fail-

ure of which we have spoken becomes pitifully apparent. And it is evidently explained by the fact that men have not obeyed that law of God which is written in the very constitution of the human soul. We call this violation or neglect of law sin. A popular phrase conceives of men as breaking the laws of God. This phrase is unfortunate. When men violate the law, they do not break the law, but break themselves against the law. The law remains eternally unchanged as the nature of God. Men may violate the law of health, but the result is not the broken law, but broken health. Just so with the law of righteousness. We see broken manhood all about us because God's law has been violated, wilfully transgressed or carelessly neglected.

Man's sin a violation of law.

This fact that sin is lawlessness must be earnestly emphasized. We know what lawlessness means in human government. The science of sociology exalts the place of law. The scientific demand of every intelligent citizen is that he cultivate reverence for law. But this reverence must evidently be given to the laws of God, since lawlessness in the divine government must be just as fatal as in that of men. That is to say, the science of sociology demands that God shall maintain His law, because the order of the universe depends upon it. The law of God, as we have already seen in a former chapter, is the expression of the nature of God Himself; and if God is to re-

main righteous and is to maintain His love of righteousness, He must maintain His law of righteousness. The man who violates the law of the state endangers the life of the state. The Apostle James says, "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10.) Sin is not a matter of quantity, but of principle in the heart. It is a willingness to disobey, no matter how slight the disobedience. It is a failure to be absolutely true to the right and gladly obedient to the law in the love of it as the expression of the holy will of God. Where this obedience is not given, broken character is the result.

The fatality of lawlessness.

The word salvation means health. Sin is disease. The words heal, and whole and holy are all the same word at its root meaning. The principle of sin must be studied in the light of this fundamental fact. Disease is the result of the violation of the law of health. To neglect the law is as fatal as to violate it wilfully. Sin results from the transgression or neglect of the law of wholeness, or holiness, or health. We usually think of disease as applying to the physical man, and of sin as applying to the spiritual man; but the whole man is involved in wholeness. Note here the difference between sin and guilt. Sin often brings a general condition upon many who are not themselves conscious violaters of the law, as the children of a drunkard. But just so is it with the

Therefore the fatality of sin.

children of any sinner. Guilt marks the crime of conscious wilful violation of law. Thus it comes to pass that every human being is born into sin, the sin of the race, deepening and deadening through the centuries. The science of biology points to marvelous facts of heredity in all forms of life; but to nothing more inevitable than the persistence of the marks of sin in human life. The scientific belief in character compels the recognition of the fact that man's problem is not simply that of guilt, but also that of sin. Many fail to realize the fatality of sin because they are not keenly conscious of guilt. This fatality is all too apparent on every side. It is the pathos of human history.

It is the presence of this fact of sin in the world which has led many to declare their inability to believe in the love of God. How could a loving Father create man, and involve him in such sorrows as the race knows in sin and suffering? No man has comprehended the problem of evil, and we have no reason to suppose that human limitations will ever allow of fullest understanding of it in the earthly life. Of all the mysteries which surround us this one seems to be the greatest in the concern of men. There are some facts, however, which we may appreciate about the presence of evil, which help us somewhat to apprehend its necessity in the making of character.

The problem of evil.

If we can find in nature generally a principle which is in harmony with the principle of evil in the

moral consciousness, we shall be able to appreciate a certain necessity for its presence in human development. Let us begin with the fact of consciousness. This fact is the most solid of all realities. It is the soul's most fundamental fact in which the appreciation of existence rests. But consciousness is only possible because of unceasing changes in the realm of consciousness. Otherwise there could be only a blank. Some element of unlikeness must touch that of sameness, causing a variety, and producing that discrimination of it which is the experience of consciousness, out of which comes the recognition of self as different from that which is not self. So in the realm of color, if everything were green, there could be no sense of color. If everything were sweet, there could be no sense of taste. Unless there were variety in sound, there could be no appreciation of sound. Unless the touch of pain were upon the life, there could be no realization of the reality of pleasure. (This suggestion is from Mr. John Fiske.)

The element of variety in nature which involves resistant forces.

It is in exact harmony with this principle of variety that we realize the inevitable fact that we could have no appreciation of the good unless the evil be present. In all the foregoing instances the entering in of the element which involves variety, and the basis for consciousness, carries the effect of an antagonistic force, a resistant power to be dealt with. In the realm of character this must be the principle of

evil. Without it moral consciousness would be unthinkable, for character is that moral strength which results from the growth of a free moral agent, in the victory over the power of evil. The struggle of the moral agent involves the recognition of that which is opposed to the good. It is the appreciation in the moral consciousness that obedience to the law is according to the will of God, while violation of the law is contrary to the will of God. Evil is recognized as the possible alternative which the moral agent may choose, as he faces the duty of deciding to obey or disobey the law of righteousness. Hence there can be no holy life without the presence and withstanding of evil. Since this necessity cannot be denied, let us emphasize earnestly the scientific demand that we accept a manifest fact though it be touched by mystery. This much is clear. Evil is necessary as the condition of moral character.

The principle of evil necessary to character.

But let us note clearly that the presence of evil is not the same thing as the fact of sin. Man must contend against evil if moral character be made; but man did not need to yield to the power of evil. It was not according to the desire of God that man should yield to evil. Not until man yielded to evil did sin enter into the human heart, bringing the sense of guilt with it. We must remember that Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He could only realize the perfection of

Yet sin clearly displeasing to God.

moral character by going through this same discipline of withstanding evil; but it was not necessary that he should yield to the power of evil. It was man's fatal violation of the law of God that gave evil more than its original place as a resistant force in human discipline. It became a master where it should only be an antagonist, while man, who should have been a conqueror, became a slave.

This most important fact is the more apparent when we remember the statements previously made regarding the evidence of the nature of God being manifest in the laws which are the expression of His will. But sin is a violation of the law. The principle of evil is the very thing against which the law ever warns us, as it points the way of blessing through obedience. This is therefore the final proof that sin, which is against God's law, is repugnant to God. He can take no pleasure in the wicked who refuse to walk in a law-abiding spirit in the way of blessing. God has allowed the presence of evil, as necessary to moral character; but yielding to evil, in violation of God's law, is manifestly contrary to God's will, and separates men from the fellowship of God. The children forfeit the sonship, suffering comes in as the penalty of sin, and the race writes its history in blood and tears.

God's will in law. Sin the violation of law.

If men complain that God ought to have made a world where all could have developed moral character without running the risk of incurring any ill

effects because of disobedience, they might as well insist that God should have made a world where two and two make five, and where circles would be square. For we have found this principle to be in the nature of things, if conscious personality is to develop character. Men might as well insist upon a form of human government where citizens could be lawless without suffering the penalty. Society is impossible in strength and prosperity except where law is reverenced and gladly obeyed. Law in community relations is for the very purpose of developing the finest possible life in each citizen as a member of the social fabric. Just so the evident purpose of God is that man should realize righteousness by conquering evil. The struggle for character is the highest condition of moral victory and spiritual life. Obedience to the law of God is ever the way of growth for the man who knows that only thus is it possible to realize the noblest character in the individual, and to realize the consummation of a humanity rising into increasing fellowship with God.

God's purpose vindicated.

We know that men in civilized society instantly repudiate the suggestion that lawlessness be ignored. Social chaos would follow. Evidently it is just as impossible for God to ignore lawlessness; for it is rebellion against Him, and must be put down. Only a law-loving and law-abiding spirit can be worthy of the children of God, and nothing else can be worthy of God. A loving father must be obeyed, or disci-

pline ceases, and the disobedient child ruins his character in self-will. Should the earthly father be a king whose kingdom must be administered for the good of millions, he must subject his lawless child to discipline by enforcing the penalty of the violated law. The science of sociology insists that the welfare of the kingdom demands this. That father, in connection with the discipline, will do all in his power to win the child to loving obedience, and to the appreciation of the blessedness of such obedience. Just so must our loving Father in the heavens do, both in discipline and in the work of restoration.

The disobedient must be disciplined.

It becomes perfectly manifest, in view of these facts, that any process which will bring man into a new life of freedom from sin must be a process of discipline, which will lead through the suffering which comes as the penalty of violated law. The physician who comes to heal the sin-sick will have some painful operations to perform. Moreover let us realize that this remedial work must be thorough-going. You cannot heal a man who has small-pox until the small-pox is gone. Redemption from sin is not simply the escape from the penalty of sin; but the realization of the power to conquer sin. Not simply the fear of punishment can safeguard a man from the power of evil. We have shown that only the love of purity can bring the power of the law

Restoration only through discipline.

of purity into the life. Nothing else will secure victory over sin in the human heart.

We need to emphasize the hopelessness of sin, for there are those who deny its awfulness, and would have us belittle its power to kill the soul. We can only pity their blindness. The broken life is the harbinger of death. The man who starves must die. It is true spiritually as well as physically. True happiness is impossible for the man who knows he is the victim of a fatal disease. All the money in the world cannot buy living water for the thirsty soul.

The wreck sin has wrought.

Man must turn back to the love of God in order to live in obedience to God's law. Everywhere are written the words, "Obey and live: disobey and die!" The bread that perishes mocks the hunger of the immortal spirit. History has recorded the despair of the men who have realized their helplessness and hopelessness in sin. Cicero wrote in *De Legibus:* "We talk as if all the miseries of men were comprehended in death, pain of body and sorrow of mind; but the sting of conscience, the remorse of guilt, is in itself the greatest evil."

One of the worst pieces of folly in human history is the folly of ignoring the deadly character of sin. Certain evolutionists would have us believe it to be only the mark of ignorance clinging to the man as he leaves the animal behind. But the assumption of the evolutionist that man is everywhere leaving the animal behind is not justified by the facts. Evo-

lution does not mean always a progress from the bad to the good. It means the development of what is in the germ, good or bad. Snakes continue to breed snakes. Eagles continue to hatch out eagles. Evil becomes more completely evil, and good develops an increasing good. Ages ago men who sought righteousness revealed characters as fine as our own time produces, as they lived in fellowship with God, while our age beholds moral degradation in some men as great as the race ever knew.

The folly of ignoring the deadliness of sin.

From this condition of sin the pagan world saw no way of escape. Lucretius wrote, "Let us trample religion under out feet." A desolating fatalism filled the popular mind. Zeno and Cleanthes both committed suicide, and their Stoicism has been described as "an apprenticeship for death." Seneca wrote, "Seest thou thy throat, thy heart: they are the ways of escape from bondage," then took poison and opened his veins, crying, "Ah, if one might only have a guide to truth!" Such was the wreck to which human character had come through the violation of the laws of God. The Apostle Paul described men aright when he said, "they were without God, and without hope in the world."

Man's despair in sin.

It was at this time that Jesus Christ came as the revealer of character to men, a character so perfect that no man could ever suggest how it could be improved by adding anything to it, or by taking any-

thing from it. We shall discuss His coming, His teaching, His character, His work, in a later chapter.

Christ's character the one perfect life.

At this time it is important to take account of the fact. There is a historic character standing at the pivot-point of the world's history, which has come to be the world's light of life, the world's hope of victory. We are about to consider, in the following chapters, the method of God's work of redemption which is consummated in Christ. But preliminary to that study we must note certain facts about human character which naturally suggest the method which would meet sinful man's need. Human nature is God's creation, and science teaches in all nature a marvelous adaptation in the Creator's plan according to the need of the creature.

The artistic science of photography points the way for us just at this point. Character building is a process of spiritual photography. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." We all know the truth of this. It is this inner consciousness which convicts of sin so surely. We are able often to live circumspect lives outwardly; but the real life is in the realm of the thoughts and desires. Out of the inmost life we know the evil comes, as Christ said. Until there shall touch the inmost life of the sinner a power which shall cleanse it from sin, the case is hopeless. And until man shall realize the

Character building a process of spiritual photography.

necessity of this mighty transformation, his problem of character is hopeless, and can never be solved.

111 But this power must be the power of the truth. Paul's description of this process of character-building is accurately scientific: "We all, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Lord, the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:18.) Again he refers to the same process when he urges the Romans not to be "conformed to this world," but to be "transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God." (Rom. 12:1-2.) Now reflection is of two kinds, and both are involved in this process of transformation. First, is that reflection which marks every man's life, revealing just what is the dominant thought in his real living. If you wish to know the man, you do not ask him about himself. You just watch him for a time. The real character is revealed in what he does. His actions prove the true nature of his dominant ambitions, his inmost desires, his honest struggle. He is absorbed by some vision of the thing which he desires to secure. It may be worthy or unworthy, but it is there. He believes this is the thing most worth while. He may be deceived, but the belief is the explanation of his life. His faith, its quality, its intensity, is the index to the real life of the man.

Every man's character a reflection of his thought.

The other kind of reflection is the concentration of man's powers of thinking upon the subject in hand. It is not an accident which indicates the real significance of such thinking. Contemplation is contempling, building a temple. Instruction is building a structure in the soul. Information is a forming in the life of a character which is simply the product of the spiritual photography, according to which the vision of the truth makes its impression upon the life. That old adage that teaches that "knowledge is power" is true. Therefore the scientific demand for the redemption of sinful man, with his broken character, out of his despair because of his conscious weakness, is for a vision of a life which shall reveal the truth which has the power to make men free, which has transforming power sufficient to change the convictions, the desires, the purposes of men. Will God give men such a vision as this? Will the law written in all nature which points to the adequate supply of the need of the creature, fail at this point to meet the need of man, the highest of all creation? Everywhere in nature potencies of healing set to work to heal any hurt in plant or animal life. The uniformity of law compels the scientific inference that the Creator will meet this need in man. Moreover the fact that man is the highest of the creatures justifies the expectation that the manifestation of God

The scientific demand for the revelation of a holy life to men.

in meeting human needs at this point will be the highest form of manifestation of His nature, His presence, His power, ever given.

In a former chapter we have noted man's finite limitations, and the consequent impossibility of his ever solving the problems of human life without a revelation from above. This fact relates itself to the moral need just emphasized. But there is another fact which points to the reasonableness of believing that God will give man a vision of the life that is above the level of the human. This is the fact of the marvelous endowment which God has given to man, in the capacity to become a child of God. Though finite, man's place in nature bespeaks his place in the Creator's plan and his powers indicate that his life can only be satisfied in fellowship with God. He has unraveled many of the mysteries which at one time hid their secrets. His discoveries, his increasing mastery of the forces of nature, his progress in the arts, his power in the classification of knowledge, his creative ability in so many spheres, his supplementing of nature itself in the cultivation of varied forms of fruit and flower, his appreciation of the harmonies of sound and actual production of them in great oratorios, and above all his moral discernment which has wrought itself into the fibre of a civilization which has ever suggested the victory of righteousness both for the

Man's capacity an earnest of the revelation of God.

individual and for society,—all this reveals such possibilities in the development of human character as to make it impossible to believe that a loving Father in the heavens would not seek to realize in man a constant growth of this fellowship of knowledge and power in a life in union with Himself. Every teaching of science concerning progress in all creation points with compelling conviction to this revelation of God to men.

But the entrance of sin has marred the wonderful picture, and man's ability only increases his condemnation. Had sin never entered, it is a scientific inference to believe that a revelation of God might have been given to men, as a means to a more complete development of knowledge and life into a growing fellowship on the part of the children with the Father. But the fact of the entrance of sin made it necessary to give to men that knowledge of God which would first lead to the redemption of the human character from sin, and then point to the possibilities of the future glories of the redeemed character in the onward development of the powers which even now are so marvelous in the human soul. The healing power in all nature points us to the redeeming love in the heavenly Father's heart, a love which could not fail to do everything that could be done for the restoration of mankind. We shall show in the succeeding chapters that this revelation of redeeming grace has been

The revelation of redeeming love to men.

given, this redemption has been provided for men through Jesus Christ.

But there is another vital consideration to be noted before we turn from the study of character. It is the subject of man's responsibility in view of all the facts which we have brought into our discussion. There are some who will say that since man is born into sin, with the tendency to sin confirmed through centuries of human transgression, it is impossible for him to resist the power of evil, and therefore he is not responsible for his sin. It is true that responsibility is measured by ability and opportunity. Duty takes on meaning in view of this responsibility. Moral obligation is measured by conscious responsibility, and character is the outcome of the degree to which man is faithful to recognized duty. We reach the basal facts involved in this question by noting the significance of the terms which point us to the truth. Duty is that which is due. Obligation is a debt. That which is due we owe. But the word "ought" simply tells us that we owe it. How then are we to determine what we owe? By testing the validity of the claims which are made upon us. These claims are of three sorts.

Man's responsibility considered.

First, our own nature makes certain claims. We realize, as we consider these claims, that we owe certain things to our physical nature, and certain things to our psychical nature, and certain things to our spiritual nature. There is a danger that we may pay

more than we owe to the physical, and go bankrupt in the realm of the spiritual. But man is a social being, and cannot live unto himself. Right springs out of rights. Rights and moral obligations grow out of relationships. We owe some things to society. Every man bears his own burden only as he sees that part of it is helping to bear the burdens of others. There is a danger that we may give more to self than we owe, as compared with what we owe to our fellow men. But man is also a creature. We have noted in the beginning of this chapter how the purpose of the Maker is written into the very constitution of the human soul. Man's endownment, his marvelous capacity, which we have noted, constitutes the claim of God upon him to realize his highest development up to the best possible unfolding of his life in fellowship with God. There is a danger that man may give more relatively than he owes to self, or earthly concerns, and fail to give that which he owes to God. Not only is duty to self best realized in the faithful discharge of duty to our fellow men, but both of these are best discharged as we are faithful to our duty toward God.

Duty determined by the valid claims made upon us.

But, as has been said, sin has weakened the moral nature of men, and they find themselves coming short of the purpose of God, coming short of the hopes of their friends, coming short of their own best purposes. How then shall we fix responsibility for man's estate? Let us note that men have established

a great system of jurisprudence, which rests upon a world-wide recognition of human responsibility for conduct. Men everywhere are counted responsible if they violate the laws of the state. No excuse is accepted for such violation of law unless the plea of insanity can be established. This means that the scientific demand upon every moral being is the demand that he shall face his moral responsibility honestly, and not try to shirk it, when he knows he is guilty of sin. The first condition to any man's being a better man is the honest confession of known sin. To that must be added a genuine repentance of his sin, with full purpose of and endeavor after a new obedience to the law. The man who is not willing to confess his sin is hopeless, so long as he refuses to be honest before God about this matter.

Courts of law prove man's recognition of moral responsibility.

But all this is not enough. Man is still conscious of his weakness in the face of evil. He is not able to save himself from sin. The history of the race is proof of this fact. Where then is his responsibility? Note the answer; nothing is more important to character building than to realize it clearly, and with compelling conviction. Man has not the ability of the agent, but he has the ability of the recipient. He has not the power to save himself from sin; but when a salvation is offered to him, he has the power to accept or reject it. This power every man is exercising every day. Therefore every man is responsi-

ble for his moral condition who has been offered the power that will enable him to conquer sin, if he will receive it. In the succeeding chapters we shall show how this offered salvation has been brought to men in Jesus Christ. But before we conclude our discussion of the problem of character, it must be fully realized that every man is responsible for his attitude, as a recipient, toward Jesus Christ. We have shown the scientific demand which compels a man to go to Christ who wishes character. We here have seen how the moral constraint is perfectly clear in view of man's need, and in view of the offered salvation which Christ has brought to men. If I wish to go to London, but have no money, I am not responsible for not going. But if one offers me a thousand dollars, I am then responsible, for I may accept, or reject, that which enables me to do what I could not do before.

Man's responsibility not that of the agent, but that of the recipient.

The review of the foregoing will bring the reader to the clearer realization of the truth of his tremendous responsibility for his character and destiny. God has marvelously endowed him with capacity to reach up to the very fellowship of God, if only he possesses the power to conquer sin. But unless he shall have that power, his manhood is doomed to be a wreck. Let men face the fact with sobered minds and earnest hearts. Your destiny is in your own hands. Christ stands at the door and knocks. You

Your destiny is in your own hands.

hold the key. You must open the door. You have either opened it, or you are barring it against the entrance of your Saviour. Your character, broken by sin, is hopeless and helpless except you open the heart to Jesus Christ. He offers to you the way of life. Thousands have proved Him true, and have proved His power to be sufficient to give the victory over sin, transforming the character. In fact the explanation of much of that splendid achievement on the part of men already noted in this chapter is the fact that most of them are redeemed men, having a new vision of life and insight into truth because they know Christ. He offers all this to you. You alone are responsible, for you have the power of the recipient, to accept Him, or to reject Him. What will you do with Jesus, the Christ, the Saviour of men?

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN THE BIBLE.

V.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN THE BIBLE.

The considerations presented in the preceding chapters have prepared us to see the reasonableness of believing that God would give to men a revelation of the knowledge necessary for the redemption of man from sin, and for the development of the human character into an increasing fellowship with God. Therefore, when we come to study the writings held sacred by different religions, and claiming to be revelations from God, we are at once prepared to make our test of the validity of the claims. Our first question is—What result do these writings produce in the making of character? That is the first and final question. Many others go with it; but it is supreme. For instance, if the Koran teaches a cosmogony which is denied by the telescope, that is against it, in so far; yet if the teachings of the Koran actually led men to produce the best characters in the history of the race, the fact that its idea of the world is not scientific would not be sufficient to lead men to cast it aside. What the world wants is a teaching that will

How to test the claims of the writings sacred to various religions.

enable it to conquer sin and realize a redeemed character. Now the Bible is both harmonious with the teachings of science and history; but its power in the world is explained by the fact that its system of truth is proving the greatest source of light for men in the darkness of sin.

That careful student of social conditions, Mr. Benjamin Kidd, has declared that the greatest factor in any nation's life is not its commercial factor, not its social factor, not its intellectual factor, but is its moral and religious factor. Therefore we have a point of view from which to test the various moral and religious teachings known to men. These teachings have had distinctive spheres of influence, and their real power is proved in the life of the people who have accepted them. Thus China is the answer to Confucianism, India is the answer to Hinduism and Buddhism, the Turkish Empire is the answer to Mohammedanism, the Russian Empire is the answer to the teachings of the Greek Church, the Papal country is the answer to the teachings of Roman Catholicism, and the Protestant nations are the answer to the teachings of Protestant Christianity. Nothing more in detail is necessary to be said at this point. Intelligent students of history agree that the Christian's Bible, thus tested, must be placed first among the revered writings of men, as the book whose moral and re-

The test applied in the life of the nations of the world.

ligious teachings have been proved the best the world has ever known.

Our next inquiry, therefore, is as to the character of the Bible in its teaching. Does this teaching meet the needs of men which we have noted in the preceding chapters. If so, it has vindicated its claim upon every honest seeker after character. We are concerned about all the facts regarding the Bible, its origin, its literary form, its historic and scientific features, and we shall consider all these. But these considerations must never be put on the same level with the supreme purpose of the book. The Apostle Paul tells us of this purpose in his letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:15-17), where he speaks of "the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," and adds, "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." The Apostle John also, (John 20:31) says concerning the writing of the Gospel which bears his name, "These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing ye may have life in His name." Our scientific question now is—Does the Bible accomplish that which Paul and John declare to be its purpose? Does it lead men to believe in Jesus

The supreme purpose of the Bible.

Christ? Does it, through this faith, realize in men spiritual life? Does its teaching produce a character of such sort as to lead men to say its fruits are proof of the validity of its claim?

Where shall we go for our answer to these questions? Evidently we must go to those places where the Bible has been most fairly tested, where its teachings have been most faithfully lived by men in daily life. Not where the Bible is nominally accepted, yet kept from the people; but to those lands where the Bible is in the hands of the people, as their rule of faith and daily practice. That is to say, the only scientific test possible must be in Protestant Christian lands, or where Protestant Christians have gone to teach the Bible as they believe it and live it. Among these we should find the answer to our question. If we inquire of the statesmen who have been regarded as among the noblest of modern times, we have John Quincy Adams declaring, "In whatever light we view the Bible, whether with reference to revelation, or history, or morality, it is a mine of knowledge, like which none other has ever been found in any land or any realm." Daniel Webster reverently affirms, "The sacred writings have been my daily study and vigilant contemplation. If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper." General Grant, when President of the

The tributes of leading statesmen.

United States, wrote these words: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of our liberties. Write its precepts on your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future." Mr. Gladstone, "the greatest citizen of the nineteenth century," wrote, in his book, entitled *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture,* "The revelation of God not only illuminates, but binds. Like the credentials of an earthy ambassador, it is just and necessary that the credentials of that revelation should be tested. But if it be found genuine, if we have proofs of its being genuine equal to those of which, in the ordinary concerns of life, reason acknowledges the obligatory character, then we find ourselves to be not independent beings engaged in an optional inquiry, but the servants of a Master, the pupils of a Teacher, the children of a Father, and each of us already bound with the bonds which those relations imply. Then head and knee must bow before the Eternal, and the Divine will must be embraced and followed by man with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his soul, and with all his strength."

If we turn to the greatest scientists, we must recall the words of Lord Kelvin, whose Christian faith is well known. Sir John Herschel wrote: "All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths con-

tained in the sacred Scripture." We may pass such names as Newton, Agassiz, Linnæus, LeConte and Dana, to note the testimony of Charles Darwin, one of the most candid of students. When Darwin visited Terra Del Fuego in 1833, he wrote: "The Fugians are in a more miserable state of barbarism than I ever expected to see any human being." He thought it would be impossible to civilize them. Protestant Christians took the Bible there, taught it, and lived its precepts. Darwin visited it again in 1869. His astonishment was great to find those people, whose condition he thought hopeless, transformed into Christian men and women. He wrote to the London Missionary Society, enclosing twenty-five pounds for its work, and said: "I shall feel proud if your Committee shall think fit to elect me an honorary member of your Society. I certainly should have predicted that not all the missionaries in the world could have done what has been done. It is wonderful, and it shames me, as I always prophesied failure." Gladly Mr. Darwin acknowledged the proof of the power of the Bible to transform and elevate mankind.

The testimony of eminent scientists.

When we turn to ask some of the greatest of modern philosophers as to their judgment, we have the reply of Immanuel Kant, saying, "You do well in that you base your peace and piety on the Gospels, for in the Gospels alone, is the source of

deep spiritual truths, after reason has measured out its whole territory in vain." John Locke said: "To give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I should need to send him to no other book than the New Testament." Sir William Jones declares that "in the Bible are more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written." Principal Caird leads us to realize the purpose of the Bible, as well as its character, when he says: "The Spirit of God in the sacred narrative is instructing us concerning the principles of the divine government—the inherent might of right, the irresistible prevalence in the long run of good over evil, the tendency of selfishness and wrong to sap the vitality and undermine the fair prosperity of nations. But these are principles which are not simply authoritatively announced in the pages of that narrative, but are woven into the life of humanity."

The teaching of great philosophers.

If we turn to the great lights in the world of literature, we find the Bible quoted in every play of Shakespeare, furnishing all his greatest themes to Milton, inspiring the highest conceptions of Wordsworth, and the very soul of Tennyson's triumphant philosophy of life. Goethe said: "Let the world progress as much as it likes; let all branches of human research develop to the very utmost; nothing

The witness of men of literary genius.

will take the place of the Bible." Coleridge said: "I know the Bible is inspired because it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book." Walter Scott asked Lockhart to bring him "the book." Upon being asked which book, he replied: "There is but one book." Lowell's defenses of the Bible are familiar to the general reader. Hamilton Mabie has recently said "the Bible remains, and must remain, the greatest and most influential book we possess—the fundamental text-book of Western morals and philosophy of life."

Such are some of the testimonies of the leaders of the world's life and thought, who are not distinctively the champions of religion, concerning the Bible. No college in the first rank today fails to give the Bible consideration in various parts of its Curriculum. A careful calculation has determined that three hundred millions of copies of the Bible are in use in the world, and every year an increasing number is in demand. In the face of these facts and testimonies, any man who is superficial enough to dismiss the Bible from his attention, is not only unscientific, but is unworthy of recognition as an intelligent student of human life and history. When we consider its place in the study and life of the peoples of the leading nations of the earth today, in the full blaze of the

No difficulties in the Bible which have not been met by intelligent students.

light of the 20th century, let us remember that increasing numbers of the strongest men of all nations are accepting the Bible as the record of the revelation of God to men, and as the one worthy rule of faith and life. Therefore when questions arise about the Bible, or difficulties are met in its study, these must always be approached as questions and difficulties which thousands of intelligent men have faced and answered with sincerity and satisfaction. That is to say, there are facts, throwing light upon all these difficulties, of such character as to compel the honest student to see that they are not hindrances to an intelligent and scientific faith in the Bible as the record of the revelation of God to men.

Let us note here a distinction of vital importance. There are some who have looked upon the Bible with the idea that it is a sort of artificial and unnatural thing, let down from heaven. Something like this is claimed for the Koran and for the Book of Mormon, but nothing of the sort is in the minds of intelligent men regarding the Christian's Bible. God's revelation of Himself is in nature and in human history. "God having in old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of the days spoken unto us in His Son." (Heb. 1:1-2.) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh (not

The Bible not the revelation of God; but the record of the same.

paper and ink) and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jno. 1:1 and 14.) But see what this means. The Bible is not the revelation. It is the record of that revelation. "The Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book." (Ex. 17:14.) In the book of Job the revelation of God in nature is recorded in passages of marvelous sublimity in thought and language. Froude rightly declares that the book of Job "will be found at the last to tower above all the poetry of the world." The Old Testament records so much of God's revelation of His presence and power in history as is connected with the life of the chosen people of Israel. It is the story of teaching by sign and type, by symbol and law, by discipline and by visions, all in the experiences of the people. The messages come through law-givers and prophets, by psalmists and wisdom teachers. The New Testament record gives the story of the life of Christ, and of the spread of the Christian Church, together with several apostolic letters and the apocalypse of John. Let the reader see clearly the difference between the revelation and the record of the same, and immediately he is prepared to appreciate the first important fact about the book itself.

The next step is to appreciate the plan and perspective of the Bible. It is very important to remember that the Bible is intended to give only so much of the history of man as is involved in the

story of God's purpose and work in redemption. This at once explains the fact that all matters external are only touched upon as they bear a relation to this work of redemption. The book of Genesis is the key to this plan. The first chapter sets forth the creation story, emphasizing the two facts that God, the Creator, is a Spirit, and that man, the crown of creation, is made in the image of God. The second chapter is not so much a repetition of the creation story, but rather indicates that man is the creature with whom we have to deal. There follows the account of the entrance of sin, and the beginnings of the purpose and work of redemption. Quickly the record hastens to the statement concerning the judgment of the race at the time of the flood, and then to the choice of one man, who alone seemed to realize the truth about God, and to give promise of faith necessary to a turning of men to God. It is most instructive to note how the record narrows down to the time of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, at which time the history of the chosen people, as a nation, begins. All the rest of the Old Testament is the record of God's dealings with Israel, both directly, and indirectly, through other nations. The whole development of the history is to show how the hope of the people was cultivated in God's promise of a coming Savior, who would fulfil the work of redemption thus being carried on. The New Testament introduces the Savior in the Gospel-record, and the story

The plan of the Bible to give the story of redemption.

of the work of His Spirit and His followers, as the fruits of His life and death were appreciated and appropriated by the early Church which He established. This story of God's work of redemption should ever be kept in mind as the explanation of the character of the Bible.

With this plan in mind, we are prepared to appreciate the true perspective of the Bible. All the Old Testament points forward to the Christ. All the New Testament centers in His first coming to the earth, and points forward to the consummation of the redemption in Him, His coming again, and His reign in glory. Christ therefore determines the true perspective of the record from first to last. This fact cannot be too earnestly emphasized. We have noted that the Bible itself is not the revelation of God, but the record of that revelation. It is a priceless record, but only a record. The revelation has been made in various ways, all working out through the experiences of human life, and its fulness is in Jesus Christ. A strange idea has come into traditional thought that the Bible is the only foundation of the Christian faith. But the Bible does not so teach. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3 : 11.) Christ Himself said: "I am the truth." (John 14 : 6.) Dr. Munroe Gibson is clearly correct in the statement that "Not the Bible, but Christ Himself,

The true perspective of the Bible centers in Christ.

the personal historical Christ, is the ultimate foundation on which the entire system of Christianity rests." The Bible itself, as the record of God's revelation, rests upon the revelation, and the living Christ is the fulness of that revelation. We do not detract from the value of the Bible, but rather do we strip from it some burdens which men have laid upon it, and we are enabled to understand its character in clearer light.

As soon as this true perspective of the Bible is clearly seen, we have a point of advantage in our position regarding many difficulties connected with the Old Testament. It is absurd to explain anything in the Old Testament in any other way than by its relation to the development of the people of Israel up to the time of Christ. The true perspective enables us to find light shining upon all these points, which would otherwise be dark. Christ alone has taught us how to understand the Old Testament. He has pointed out two kinds of material therein, first that which is eternal in its truth, and then that which was temporary, educational, progressive, destined to lose its authority for men, because higher standards, given by Christ Himself, were to take their place. He said to the people: "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, etc., . . . but I say unto you, etc." In several instances (Matt. 5th chapter) He lifts up the

This perspective throws light upon many difficulties.

standard. Then he proceeds to explain why God allowed lower moral standards in the earlier times. They brought to Him a question as to the law of divorce, and He answered: "For your hardness of heart he (Moses) wrote you this commandment." We shall consider a moment later this whole problem of the education of Israel from the point of view of the science of pedagogy; but just here we must see the necessity of keeping the Bible perspective centering in Christ and in Christ alone. Let the believer never forget that his faith is first of all and always in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let no man turn him away from Christ to some point of difficulty in the Old Testament. We believe the Bible because it is all made clear in its relation to Christ. Insist that the questioner shall begin with Christ first, settle the matter of his relation to Christ first, and then he will be ready to consider any other matters of inquiry.

Our next logical consideration must be concerning the historic reliability of the Bible record. As Mr. Gladstone has said, this is a necessary inquiry on the part of intelligent men. But let us understand that our question has to do with the record itself, and not with various related matters. The main question is—Have we sufficient evidence to prove that the narrative concerning the history of the people of Israel is reliably historic? And have we sufficient evidence to prove that the historic material of the New Testament furnishes us a reliable record of the man Christ Jesus, and His followers in the begin-

nings of the Christian church? If we can prove the record to be thus reliable as history, other matters may be considered as of secondary importance. There may be some points which present difficulties to the mind of an inquirer, but if the main narrative is historical beyond a doubt, we have actual history with which to deal in our study. Men have added some features to our present form of the record which were not in the original manuscripts. For instance, there are no dates in the book of Genesis. Men have assumed to make their own chronology and have put it into the margin of our editions of the Bible. They have sometimes added to the titles of different books, without any authority to do so from the record. For instance the books of Pentateuch are called "The First Book of Moses," "The Second Book of Moses," etc. The Song of Solomon is described as a dialogue between Christ and His Church. No such statement is warranted by the record. The Epistle to the Hebrews was attributed by the King James translators to the Apostle Paul. The epistle does not justify the inference, and scholarship quite generally agrees that the evidence is against the view. All such extra-scriptural material must be left out of our inquiry. But many do not know that these items are not to be reckoned with, and thus they often cause perplexity.

The historic reliability of the Bible record.

Let us also see that the historic reliability of the record is something quite apart from any theory of

inspiration. All the sacred writings of different religions claim to be inspired. We cannot argue from a theory of inspiration to prove the reliability of the record; but we must study the character of the record in order to discover the reasonableness of believing there has been a divine influence working in and through the men who made the record, or in those of whom they wrote. President Patton, of Princeton, has truly said: "The Christian apologist cannot meet infidel objections by assuming the doctrine of inspiration. While the question of historical credibility is at issue, the battle must be fought on the ground of historical evidence. . . . Historical criticism places the Bible on a level with the most reliable human histories. Ordinary historical evidence is sufficient to satisfy us with regard to the truthfulness of statements which we find in the writings of Tacitus, Cæsar, Grote, Gibbon and Macaulay. We do not insist upon inspiration on the part of these authors as a guarantee of their credibility. Their books may contain errors. Instances of false reasoning, hasty generalization, incorrect judgment may occur in their pages, but of their general truthfulness we have no doubt."

Inspiration not involved in historic reliability.

There are two lines of evidence to prove the historic reliability of any document, internal and external. From its internal character one may fairly judge of its sincerity of purpose and genuineness of statement. The consistency of its parts, the quality of

its teachings, the results which follow the practice of its precepts, these are all evidences of the trustworthiness of the contents. External evidence proves the existence of the people and events described by other records which corroborate and illuminate the document. For example, the histories of Egypt and Babylon have given us much light on the historic accuracy of the Old Testament record. Such a monumental work as Dr. Thompson's *The Land and The Book* is of inestimable value. In it he has shown how the geography involved and the natural features of the countries mentioned in the history of Israel all go to prove the accuracy of the story of the chosen people. The Egyptology of the Pentateuch is so exact as to astonish specialists today. Dr. Brugsch Bey has said that the story of Joseph is so accurate it might have been copied from Egyptian monuments.

The historic reliability of the Old Testament.

Almost every year ancient records are brought to light which confirm some statement of the Old Testament which the scholars supposed to be a mistake. One of the most familiar is that with reference to the location of Ur of the Chaldees. Scholars knew of only one Ur, and it was at Oorfah, six hundred miles away from Chaldea. So they said the Bible must be mistaken. But Lenormant and Smith have identified Mughier as the site of the home of Terah and Abraham. The scholars were wrong because they did not have the facts in hand. When the facts came to light, the Scriptures proved

to be exactly correct. The more light men bring to bear upon the Old Testament, the more certain becomes the accuracy of its historic statements.

The same thing is true of the New Testament. The Christian Church is here, as are the Jewish people. The history of Christianity has been traced up the stream to its fountain head, bringing the Gospel material into the first century, and some of the letters of Paul to a time within twenty-five years of the life of Christ. Our acknowledged material takes us to a time where we are nearer to the historic Jesus of Nazareth than we now are to Abraham Lincoln. John Stuart Mill was not a believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures, but he made an earnest study of the evidence regarding the historic Christ. As a result of that study he wrote, "whatever else may be taken away by rational criticism, Christ is still left; a unique figure, not more unlike all his precursors than all his followers, even those who had the direct benefit of his personal teaching." Then he makes the most significant statement that even to a skeptic it remains a possibility that Christ actually was "a man charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God." When writing his *Life of Jesus*, Renan visited Palestine, touching every important point mentioned in the Gospel record, and wrote: "All that history, which at a distance seems to float in the clouds of an unreal world, thus took a form, a solidity, which

The historic reliability of the New Testament.

astonished me. The striking agreement of the texts with the places, the marvelous harmony of the Gospel ideal with the country which served it as a framework, were like a revelation to me. I had before my eyes a fifth Gospel, torn, but legible still and henceforward, through the recitals of Matthew and Mark, in place of an abstract being, whose existence might have been doubted, I saw living and moving an admirable human figure."

The general reliability of the Bible record is therefor established by competent scholarship. In the light of this fact, we may here say a word about the discrepancies which occur. There are some such discrepancies. But nowhere are they of such character as to affect the general reliability of the record. An early manuscript shows a comment written on the margin, and a later copy shows this comment embodied in the text, evidently indicating that the copyist thought it belonged in the original text. Figures are sometimes contradictory. Figures are most liable to get mixed. It must be remembered that many copies of a manuscript were often made at the same time by several men, one reading to all the company. Thus words were incorrectly copied at times. It is no longer questioned that the great mass of the material is correct. But that justifies the opinion that any discrepancies which now appear came in through incorrect work on the part of copyists. Some men have imagined they discovered discrepancies be-

The explanation of discrepancies.

tween two parts of Scripture, which proved to be harmonious on closer study. The fact remains that this subject is not of sufficient importance to demand a lengthy discussion. The Bible has been in the hands of men, and the wonder is that its human copyists and keepers have kept it so free from corruption that no important difference occurs in all the manuscripts in existence on any great teaching or statement of historic occurrence.

A particular feature of this subject is of such importance as to justify special consideration. This is the existence of four Gospel records. Some men have made much of the fact that these different records do not agree in every detail. Let it be remembered that the spread of Christianity was from the three centers of Jerusalem, Antioch and Rome, where the Gospel was preached to the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans. This preaching had been carried on for a long time when the Gospel records were written. Naturally the apostles and evangelists would present the truth as it would be best adapted to the people whom they addressed. Matthew has given us the record of the way the Gospel was preached to the Jews. Its great feature is its emphasis upon the fulfilment of prophecy. Matthew contains no explanation of Hebrew words, or Jewish customs or places, while all the other three Gospels do contain these. Mark gives us the record of the way the Gospel was presented to the Romans. Its keynote is power. It has less of the teachings of Christ than the others.

The individual character of the four Gospels.

It is only in Mark that the Roman centurion is recorded as saying, at the cross, "Truly this man was the son of God!" Luke's Gospel is the record of the way it was preached to the Greeks. Its dominant tone shows Christ as He would appeal to the broader humanities of the Greeks. Divide Luke into one hundred parts, and only forty-one parts are in common with the other Gospels. It was never intended that these Gospels should agree in all details. They all tell the same story, but in a different way, and some introduce facts and teachings which others omit. John presents a supplementary Gospel which involves the spiritual, rather than the historic significance of the life and teachings of Christ.

Within the last century some questions have arisen regarding the harmony of the Scripture record with the teachings of physical science. It has been noted that the Bible is not primarily concerned about teaching science. A book written over three thousand years ago would not be expected to contain the scientific teachings of the nineteenth century. Such teachings at that early day would have been discredited. Yet if it be a record of God's revelation, all its teachings should be harmonious with all subsequent truth in the great principles set forth. Later details in discovery may elaborate the knowledge, but a general agreement should exist. This is exactly what we find. We are told that God "created

the heavens and the earth." Long years after, Ptolomey would have said "the earth and the heavens"; but the Bible accords with modern science here. Then the first chapter of Genesis presents the order of creation as progressing from the lowest forms to the highest. Vegetation first appears, then the simplest forms of life, birds and fishes, and finally the mammals, last of whom is man. Modern science makes us wonder if it could have been possible for mere human knowledge at that far off time to have been in such marvelous harmony with the general order of creation as we know it today. The Bible represents the sun as rising and setting, just as we do. These popular notions are in the record as naturally as they are in writings of our time. Prof. Dana, of Yale University, declared that this marvelous harmony of the record in Genesis with the teaching of modern science convinced him that no man could have written it at that early day without divine illumination. The matter of the time involved in creation has often been discussed; but Genesis 2:4 uses the term "day" to cover the whole period of time involved in the creation. There is no teaching as to days of twenty-four hours. The record mentions three days before any measure of time is suggested. Both Old and New Testament teach that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years." The Bible is broad in its lines of adjustment. It holds its place in the light of the twentieth

The Bible in harmony with modern science.

century in general harmony with the teachings of all truth found anywhere and everywhere.

Another source of occasional difficulty is the question as to how much of the Bible is figurative or parabolic, especially in the realm where it might be supposed that tradition would furnish some of its material. No man with ordinary judgment can read the Scriptures without realizing that much of the record is pictorial and symbolic. The Bible is full of figures and parables. But let no man suppose that this fact detracts from the reality of the truth taught in this form. For instance, consider the much mooted question of the "historic Adam," and the problem of moral responsibility. The story in Genesis is manifestly presented in the setting of an allegory. The phrase "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" is figurative beyond a doubt. But that does not do away with the fact of man's moral struggle. That struggle was a mighty reality. Whether man came up to that struggle through a process of evolution, or faced it without such a slow approach, has nothing to do with the fact. There came a day when the first man, with a moral consciousness quickened to realize right and wrong, faced the responsibility of a free moral agent to choose between the way of obedience and life and disobedience and death. The figurative manner of telling the story only makes the fact vivid. The word "adam" is the Hebrew word for "man." There

Figurative forms of teaching emphasize the reality of the truth.

was beyond doubt a "historic Adam"; but we are not concerned about the time of his appearing upon earth, nor the figurative form of the record of his moral struggle. The tremendous fact which is recorded is what concerns us. The story in Genesis did not make man a sinner. It is there because man is a sinner, and because that fact must be related to the whole story of redemption from sin.

We are now prepared to consider those questions which have arisen concerning the moral teachings of the Old Testament. We have noted the reason which Christ gave for the lower moral standards which were allowed at the earlier time of Israel's development. The science of pedagogy insists that all teaching must be adapted to the capacities and limitations of the persons taught. When Israel came out of Egypt, the people were ignorant slaves, with the low moral standards of their environment. Only a few leaders could teach them. We realize that if Mr. Darwin had tried to teach the inhabitants of Terra del Fuego his theories of natural selection, they would have been utterly unable to understand him. It would have been just as impossible to teach the Israelites the conceptions of God which are necessary to the full development of the Christian character. There must be a gradual unfolding of the truth. The standard must be lifted slowly. Let us bring the matter down to our time, so that we may appreciate it more naturally. It is not yet fifty years since men

The lower moral standard of the Old Testament explained.

believed that God considered slavery just and right. Nineteen centuries of Christian history have witnessed men with standards of life which they thought acceptable to God. We now believe God was never satisfied with the institution of slavery, and that the Bible is clear in its teaching as to the unrighteousness of slavery. The same men who believed slavery right a half century ago, now believe it wrong, and the Bible has become clear to them at this point, where it was not before. Now this is exactly an illustration of the way that God has been compelled to lead men upward. With infinite patience He has kept the light shining, and men have come to see it slowly.

We must see that from the very beginning of the Bible times, God's revelation of His will to men has involved the great fundamental principles which inhere in His character. There is the truth that God is a Spirit and must be worshipped from the heart. There is the truth that God is holy, and that only as man is holy can he come into fellowship with God. It is made clear from the beginning that sin separates man from God, and that repentance because of sin is necessary to restoration to fellowship with God. God's mercy waits to forgive the penitent. These great teachings are in the Bible from the very beginning. They will never be outgrown. Christ gives to them a fullness of light, but even now we are so slow to apply the teachings of Christ, and must know exactly the explanation which He

gave regarding the hardness of men's hearts long ago. There are people today living under the full blaze of the light, whose conceptions of God are as far from the truth, as were those of Israel centuries long past. The secret of the progress of the race in spiritual insight and moral conviction is the spirit of obedience. God condemns much in the life of Israel, but always expresses pleasure in the spirit of obedience which they revealed. He ever commends this, but never suggests that He is satisfied with the standard they have attained. A few men grasped the great principles, and stand out in the history of the race because of that fact. Enoch, Abraham, Joseph and Moses compare well with Paul and John, with Luther and Livingstone in the quality of their character. But they were ahead of their times then, as these great Christians have also been. The secret of moral progress has therefore been in the fact that man has steadily come to understand God better, and to desire to obey God's will, in order that he might come to righteousness in character and fellowship with God. In the light of these facts difficulties regarding a lower level of morals in earlier times melt away.

Men have learned slowly to know and obey God.

In the next chapter the subject of miracles is discussed. It remains to emphasize a great fact which is in danger of being overlooked in the consideration of so many details as have held our attention in this chapter. That fact which needs clear appreciation

is that the Old Testament reveals a spiritual atmosphere which lifts it far above the sacred writings of any other religion, and makes it a fitting approach to the fullness of the truth which is set forth in the New Testament. Some people are in danger of under-rating the spiritual power of the Scriptures which made up Christ's Bible, and which formed the record of God's leadings of men up to the fulness of times, when the Messiah appeared. For instance, if we were to study the prayers of the Old Testament, we would be amazed to discover how much they reveal of appreciation of the loftiest conceptions of God. A few of the imprecations breathe the war-like atmosphere of their time; but nearly all these prayers, from Abraham to Nehemiah, reveal a prayer-life which may well be emulated by ourselves. There is nothing in all Grecian literature that touches even the lowest round of these spiritual ideas. Roman and Persian literature is even more lacking in this unique atmosphere. There are aspirations of a lofty character in the Vedas and the Zendavesta; but no conception of a personal communion with God, breathing the confidence of His guidance and the trust in His power. The exalted visions of the prophets and their teachings concerning the requirements of God on the part of men, to turn from their sin, to obey with cheerful hearts, to trust His promises of a coming Messiah, all these

The spiritual atmosphere of the Old Testament.

reveal a quality of character in Old Testament times that produced as its ultimate flower a Simeon, who waited with a beautiful expectation from God, and who is described as "just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him." (Luke 2:25-26.) "And it was revealed unto him that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ."

For while the Old Testament had developed such realities in spiritual life among the people of God, as to justify the statement that "salvation is of the Jews," that salvation was to be revealed in a fulness of truth and life, such as had not yet been given. God was to reveal Himself in Jesus Christ, according to the Scriptures, in the fulfillment of promise, in the realization of type and symbol, in the life of a man among men. It is in the New Testament record that we find, for the first time in human history the words, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, *full* of grace and truth." All revelation thus far had been partial and inadequate, because men had not been able to take its fullness. We shall study this revelation in Christ in a succeeding chapter. Let us at this point emphasize the fact that it is His wonderful life which explains the wonderful character of the record which portrays it to men. The Gospels do not describe

The New Testament records contain the fullness of the truth.

Christ: they portray Him. We are not told that His teachings and deeds were grand and splendid; but the writers simply record what he said and did, and we see for ourselves the surpassing nature of the revelation of character which they portray. It is because of the character of the Incarnate Word that the written Word has such power. It leads into an atmosphere where men feel the consciousness of God expressed in terms of the daily life.

It is in this Bible that we find the perfection of that character which men have lost revealed again. But, more, we find therein the truth which opens the way whereby men may be redeemed from sin and enabled to live that character in its strength and beauty, through the mighty power of God our Father in the heavens. This Bible carries the light of life into the darkness, and men everywhere find it to be a fountain of healing for human ills, bread for the hungry soul, comfort for the sorrowing heart, strength for the weary spirit, grace for the sin-sick life, and the herald of a glorious hope of everlasting life. The teachings of the Bible satisfy the deepest needs of the human soul, the loftiest aspirations, the noblest ambitions of the greatest men of all the centuries. Wherever it is given its place, it touches everything with transforming power, just as Mr. Darwin testified to its doing in Terra del Fuego. Where the Bible is the rule of faith and life for men, righte-

The facts which prove the sufficiency of the Bible as the book of life.

ousness is exalted as the mark of true character and the only measure of real success in human life. A Father's love shines through its pages with increasing brightness, and as men study these pages the power of that love takes possession of human hearts and wills and hands, until the love of God for men quickens the returning love of men for God, and the consequent love of man for his fellow. This is the book of which Thomas Carlyle said: "It is the one book wherein, for thousands of years, the spirit of man has found light and nourishment, and the response to whatever was deepest in his heart." In every land and among all conditions of men it has proved to be the record of that revelation of God which is sufficient to lead men to the highest and best in the earthly life, and to await with confident peace and trust the life beyond.

It is as the reader studies his Bible in the light of these facts that he will discover the one remaining fact which must be mentioned here. He will discover that this book reveals the touch of the mighty God upon the lives of men, and that it is inspired beyond that which men alone could have produced. How shall we explain those Old Testament conceptions which rise so far above the pagan darkness of the times and the people about them? Only by realizing that the divine illumination was given to them. How shall we explain the extraordinary history of Israel as a peculiar people through the centuries? Only by realizing that God was revealing Himself to

them through a spiritual worship and devotion such as no other nation on earth possessed. How shall we explain the messages of prophets who declared themselves to be constrained to give those messages by a power that welled up within them, like a fountain, until they were conscious of being the messengers of God, and not merely the human teachers of their day? Only by realizing that there were men all along in Israel who waited for a vision of God, longing to help their people in the pathway of the truth, to whom God spake by His Spirit with quickening power. How shall we explain the transcendent teachings of the New Testament, matchless as precepts for this life, and joyous with hope for the life to come, unfolding such a vision of fellowship with God as has led men into the innermost sanctuary of spiritual power, until they too, like the prophets of old, have realized the truth of the words of Coleridge, "I know the Bible is inspired because it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book"? Let the reader appreciate the actual character of the facts herein presented. Let him take the teachings into his own life and test their claims. Let him remember Christ as the center of the true perspective of it all. Let him remember that it is this same Christ who is the world's specialist in character, a character such as every honest man desires to possess. Let him note the testimony of the best men and women through the ages, not only

The Bible inspired by the spirit of the living God.

by word, but by life as well, as to the mighty power of God which touches them through the message of this book. Then it will no longer be necessary to argue that the Bible is inspired, for he will know it as he knows that the atmosphere which he breathes is quickened with life.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN MIRACLES.

VI.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN MIRACLES.

One of the most serious difficulties for many people in the way of a genuine faith in the Bible, and in religion itself, is the place which is claimed for what we call miracles in the Scripture record. Indeed there are earnest Christians who incline to the opinion that it is just as well to relegate the subject to obscurity as much as possible. But it is impossible to evade the discussion, for the fact of the miracle is inextricably intertwined through the whole record. Therefore, while the miracle may be considered by some as having no apologetic value, the Christian must show the validity, nay the necessity of its place in the earlier times of the race. It is folly to ignore the discussion, especially since the scientific study of the subject justifies the belief in the miracle as actually necessary to the best teaching of the truth in the Bible. It will be helpful to think of miracles as signs of the presence and power of God; for we are not to think so much of the signs themselves, as of the fact that they were intended to point the people to God.

The scriptures teach that miracles occurred.

The stock argument of Hume against the possi-

bility of a miracle is still urged by some present day skeptics. Hume argued that we could not believe it possible for a miracle to have occurred because it would have been contrary to the then existing nature, and because nothing in nature could explain its appearance. But Hume had not the teaching of modern science to throw light upon his problem. Science teaches us there was a time in the history of this earth when there was no life upon it. Life must have come in one of two ways, either by spontaneous generation, or by special creation. But, after years of most careful investigation, science positively teaches that it is unreasonable as yet to believe that life came into existence by spontaneous generation, and that we must believe that all life known to man came from antecedent life. Therefore science teaches men that life appeared by special creation. But that was a miracle. Nothing in the then-existing nature could explain the appearance of life. It was supernatural. But Hume was greatly mistaken in supposing that because it was supernatural it would be contrary to nature. Instead of that, it harmonized with it perfectly.

Hume's argument against the credibility of miracles.

The same thing is true of human personality, with its freedom of will, and its moral quality involving character. We recall the striking statement of Lord Kelvin that "every action of free will is a miracle to physical science." There was absolutely nothing in the then-existing nature to explain the activity of

the first creature that directed its own motion by an act of conscious will. Human personality cannot be explained by anything in nature before its appearance. The only being in all creation who knows the meaning of righteousness, who hungers after righteousness, and whom nothing but righteousness can satisfy is man. Thus we are compelled by the teachings of modern science to believe that miracles have actually occurred, and yet were not contrary to nature; but adjusted themselves to nature both harmoniously and helpfully. If this has occurred in the realms of life and personality, the suggestion that it might occur in the moral realm would be exactly consistent with what science compels us to believe. That which was vitally mistaken in the attitude of Hume and his followers was their deistic, mechanical idea of God in His relation to nature. The moment we take the modern scientific point of view, and realize that God is immanent in all nature, and that He is our loving Father, the whole problem is entirely cleared from many of the old difficulties.

Life and personality were supernatural.

The advance of science has vastly enlarged our conception of what is possible in the order of nature. So many new facts and phenomena have appeared which men would have thought impossible, without disturbing the uniformity of Nature's laws, that we are now saying "nothing is impossible." We simply understand nature better. It is evident that the

Scripture writers were in full accord with modern science in the conviction that nature is in the hands of God, and they looked past secondary causes to the divine cause Himself, thus manifesting His presence and power. Consider what is meant by a departure from nature. It is to produce something which nature left to itself would not produce. If such departure from nature be a miracle, they are thick all about us. "Artificial cultivation," doing what nature alone cannot do, is achieving much on every side. But this assumes that when we speak of nature, we refer to nature below man. It is man's free will that is doing all these special things. Consider such facts as the cultivation of fruits and flowers, which if left to themselves would quickly retrograde to the simple form of the original. All roses would revert to the unpretentious rose of the field, and the orchids would disappear, as well as the chrysanthemums. So all the varieties of pigeons would disappear, and revert to the plain blue-rock species. It is the free will of man performing what Lord Kelvin calls "miracles" in doing that which nature left to itself could never do.

Man's free will active in departing from nature.

But evidently we must think of the immanent God as moving through nature with far greater freedom and power than men can have. Human experience gives us a scientific conception of the freedom of interference, the possibility of hastening the action of

law, or doing anything that will accomplish a desirable end. Science is opposed to the belief in chance, but not to the recognition of the power of intervention by an intelligent will in nature. Such intervention is taking place every day. The old deistic view put the physical above the spiritual. The new view of the Fatherhood of God puts the spiritual above the physical, and considers all the forces in the material world as intended to subserve the spiritual welfare of man. If, therefore, any single truth is made clearer thereby, or a single immortal soul is to be helped thereby, then the miracle is worth while, and God is vindicated in its presence in human affairs. We therefore turn to consider the reasons for believing that God did manifest His presence and power to men at times in this supernatural way.

God's freedom of intervention greater than that of man.

Let us remember the character of the people of the times referred to in the Scripture record. We have noted that the masses were ignorant and undisciplined. The multitudes in Israel came to hear the law read by a few who were able to instruct them in the same. We must agree that the revelation of truth to such people must be by methods adapted to their capacity and limitations. The science of Pedagogy ever insists upon this. But modern pedagogy has emphasized the surpassing importance of the object lesson in the

The science of Pedagogy demands object lessons.

teaching of the child. Let us remember that revelation is teaching. It is not remarkable that God would teach according to the best possible method. And that would necessitate the use of the object lesson in teaching the people concerning His presence and power in their lives. Now this was exactly the divine method, according to the Bible. The science of pedagogy instantly declares there could have been no other method comparable to this for teaching the people of that time. It was the Kindergarten age of the race. The miracle was not apologetic so much as pedagogical. It was to illuminate the truth rather than to prove it.

Let us next note the consistent purpose of the miracle throughout the entire revelation of God connected with it in the Bible records. Its purpose was to authenticate the messenger of Jehovah by such manifestation of power as would convince the people that Jehovah was the true God, and mightier than the gods in whom they were trusting. Among believers this same faith in God as the true God was to be strengthened by every manifestation of the divine presence and power. Consistently with this purpose, if the people to be convinced were superstitious, the science of pedagogy would unhesitatingly say the scientific method of teaching them would be to take their superstitions into account when seeking to convince them that their gods were not worthy of their worship and obedience. Ac-

The main purpose of the miracle illustrated in Egypt.

cordingly when Moses took his message to Egypt, the object lessons of the presence and power of God with him were manifestations against some of the idols of Egypt, from the river Nile to the insects of the land. It was by this method, thoroughly scientific, remembering that the Pharaoh of the exodus was a great believer in necromancy, that Israel, on the one hand, and Egypt on the other, were convinced that Jehovah was the true God.

Likewise Elijah's test of fire on Mt. Carmel is significant because Baal was the sun-god, and if Baal could not stand the test of fire, the conclusion was final. But most striking of all is the proof of this purpose in the story of Jonah. If Jonah be a parable, the case is more striking than if it be history. For if it be a parable, then the writer of the story understood the philosophy of the miracle so thoroughly that he realized there must be the manifestation of the power of Jehovah over that of a great fish. For the greatest god of the people of Nineveh was Dagon, the fish-god. Rawlinson informs us that the image of Dagon is found in the ruins of Nineveh three times as often as of any other image of a god. But that means that Jonah's message must be authenticated by a manifestation of power greater than that of Dagon. The story of Jonah gives this part of the account with careful detail. If it be only allegory, the fact that the writer understood so perfectly the requirement of the philosophy of

The cases of Elijah and Jonah.

miracle throughout the Scripture record, is one of the most striking commentaries upon the consistency of the purpose of the miracle, and the appreciation of that purpose on the part of the people.

The whole subject of the miracle finds its highest illustration in Christ Himself, for He is the one continuous miracle from beginning to end. He is presented to us as the eternal Son of God, sent into the world to reveal the Father to men. He spoke the Father's words, did the Father's works, and revealed the Father's truth and power. He gave Himself to the death of the cross, and rose, from the grave the conqueror of death, ascending to the throne of God. The whole conception is above nature. Any particular exercise of power was simply a part of the continuous miracle which is Himself. As the Son of Man, He exhibited every phase of the natural humanity which we know; but as the Son of God as well, He revealed the prerogatives of God to men. In the order of nature, and of scientific procedure, facts take precedence of the explanation of them. The explanations may or may not be possible. When the facts have been seen, they are the proper objects of testimony. If a dozen men cannot identify a man, with whom they have been for three years, after an absence of three days, then we have no more use for a system of courts. If they be men of character, their testimony stands the more surely. If they are ready to die for the truth of their testimony, we can

Christ himself the supreme miracle.

no longer reasonably question their absolute sincerity. And since the mightiest system of truth known to mankind rests upon the fact to which they bear testimony, we readily understand why millions believe the fact, not simply because of the testimony of the first witnesses, but because of the power which the teaching based on the fact of the living Christ has revealed in the redemption of the race.

But there is another side to the scientific belief in miracles as object lessons in connection with the revelation of God to men. Christ Himself, as the supreme miracle, realized the value of the scientific method of teaching when He said to His disciples: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works sake." (John 14: 9 and 11.) Christ put the truth in terms of life. Imagine a boy at school being asked to write a definition of a mother. When it was finished, though it might be all true, he would want to say: "Come home with me, and I will show you a mother." This is the reality of the revelation of God in Christ. The miracle of the incarnation is in exact accord with the scientific demand of modern pedagogy. Thus the plain fact emerges that the science of pedagogy insists that if God were to give to men the most effective revelation of Himself possible, if He were to adopt the most scientific method of teaching men the truth

Christ is the personal object lesson revealing God to man.

about His presence and power, He must use the miracle as a necessity in that teaching. No other method could have compared with this in effectiveness.

Christ Himself was very clear in His teaching on this subject. The particular instance where He pointed out the purpose of the miracle is in connection with the healing of the palsied man, to whom He said: "Thy sins be forgiven thee." (Mark 2:3-12.) When some of the scribes counted His words blasphemy, because God only could forgive sins, Jesus stated the case. He asked whether it were easier to say to the palsied man that his sins were forgiven, or to say, "rise, take up thy bed and walk." Manifestly the first, which he had done, was easier to say, for no one could see whether the sins were forgiven, or not. But all could see if the man were given power to rise up and walk. Yet both of these manifestations of power were equally impossible for men, while they were equally easy for God. Then Christ pointed out that He would do the thing they could see in order to justify their belief that He could also do the invisible thing as surely, saying "that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it

Christ's teaching concerning miracles.

on this fashion." For the first time they realized that the purpose of the miracle was to point to the power of God to redeem men from sin. We have a further teaching in John 20:29, where Christ said to Thomas: "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen me, and yet have believed." Here we find a real value set upon the miracle as a help to faith; but the clear pointing forward to the time when men would not need the object lesson as they did in an earlier day.

We have reached this higher level in Christian lands today. But let us not forget the need of the children of the kindergarten, because we have come up to a higher grade. The advance has not been rapid. The scientific attitude toward miracles is one of instant recognition of the fact that the science of pedagogy demands this method of teaching, as the best for that age. The Bible testifies to the use of it by the living God in His revelation of Himself to men. We have said the fact of the miracle is inextricably intertwined with the record. This record gives us the history of the unfolding of the truth until we have its fulness in Christ. Even so does it lead us to see that the miracle has its complete embodiment in Christ as the very fulness of the manifestation of the presence and power of God among men. The consistency of the method as thoroughly scientific is apparent. We need no longer to apologize for the belief in miracles.

The only scientific attitude toward miracles.

Several of the sciences compel us to believe in them as not only possible and probable, but as actual, and necessary to the adequate revelation of God to men.

The teaching of Christ regarding the miracle in connection with the forgiveness of sins, as revealing the power of God, reminds us that this miracle of grace is taking place every day, in every land. This is the most wonderful of all miracles, and we see it all about us in the realm of human character. We have seen men who were in the depths of despair because of conscious slavery to sin, who had proved the utter helplessness of their own weakness to break the habits of sin which held them, touched by the power of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, until they were transformed. And these men have testified to the consciousness that a strength, not their own, kept them and delivered them from the power of sin. They have lived in the midst of those who beheld their transformation with a joyous wonder, as great as men ever felt in the presence of the healing of one born blind. It has often been so marvellous as to make it well nigh impossible to believe that the new man in Christ was once in the lowest depths of sin. Historic cases like those of John Bunyan and John B. Gough can be duplicated by many thousands. They testify to the conscious certainty that it is the power of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, which has wrought this miracle of grace. It is, therefore, not strange that men, with this experience of the reality

The continuing miracles of grace.

of the wonderful salvation of God in their lives, should have no difficulty in counting it reasonable to believe that the miracles of healing, of mercy and of judgment, should have taken place, as recorded in the same book which points them to the divine grace which has delivered them from sin by this same power of our loving Father in the heavens.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN CHRIST.

VII.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN CHRIST.

The introductory words of the Gospel according to John read thus: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In Him was life and the life was the light of men. . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." All the previous chapters have had constant reference to Christ as the central object of our faith. In many particulars they have been preparatory to this special study of His person and work. We will follow the four lines of thought suggested by John in 1:14, considering (1) The necessity for the incarnation. "The life was the light of men." (2) The deity of Christ. "The glory as of the only begotten of the Father:" The revelation of Sonship. (3) The atonement by Christ. "The glory of the fulness of the divine love." The adoption into Sonship. (4) The redemption through Christ. "The glory of the fulness of the divine truth." The realization of Sonship.

Four divisions in this chapter.

THE NECESSITY FOR THE INCARNATION.

The incarnation of Jesus Christ was the application of a great law which was not unique in the Man of Nazareth. Its fullness of realization in Him was unique, but the law itself is one of universal application in all development of human life. Its necessity underlies the revelation and appreciation of all truth. That law is that every word must be made flesh, must come into the actual experiences of men, must be incarnate in lives which express the significance of the truth. Otherwise the word goes unheard and unknown. The morning stars sang together through the ages, but no man heard their music, or understood their message. Men pondered their mysteries, and tried to spell out their meaning, but did not succeed. Ptolemy thought he had read the message, and for years men accepted his reading; but something was evidently lacking. At last Copernicus came, and in him the fullness of the truth about the stars was first made plain, in him the word of the stars was made flesh. Since Copernicus men have known the stars as they could not before. In like manner the flowers had a message which men did not understand. Ray and Thompson and Brunfels spelled out some of the letters, but not until Linnæus came was the word of the flowers made flesh. Electricity flashed its message

Every word must be made flesh.

in the skies; but men saw only that which was to be dreaded, until one day Franklin caught a vision. Others have followed, and today Edison, Tesla and Marconi are giving us a fuller knowledge of the meaning of the word of electricity. Not yet is this word fully made flesh, nor will it be except as men bring it down into the actual realm of human experience and daily life. Then its message will be appreciated and appropriated.

This is the great law which underlies the necessity for the incarnation. When the word of truth concerning God, and the relations between men and God, must be made known to men, there was just one way for it to be done in order to make it vital in human experience. It must be made flesh, must be brought into the life of man as a living reality. Here, as elsewhere, men had tried to spell out this greatest of all words. Moses had caught much of it. That spirit in him which paused to study the burning bush is exactly the spirit which God looks for in men, to arrest their thought, and to open their minds and hearts to receive the truth. And God had crowded all He could upon every man who was willing to hear. God gave to Zoroaster, and to Buddha, and to Confucius and to Mohammed all that they could take. They all did something to spell out the word, in the attempt to help their fellow-men. But their best was but partial, and betrayed a fatal lack. It was not adequate to meet

Every other word was partial and inadequate.

the needs of men, not adequate to solve the problem of character, not adequate to answer the cry of men for a way for redemption from sin. There must be a fullness of the truth, touching human needs with power, and illumining the dark places in the pathway. The one way must be adopted. Hence we read that "When He cometh into the world, He saith, . . A body hast thou prepared me; . . lo, I am come to do thy will, O God!" (Heb. 10:5-7.) This was simply the recognition of the necessary law, and obedience to the same.

Now for the first time we have the word "full" used to describe the completeness of the revelation of truth in Christ. The failures of others to be adequate messengers of the truth were due to the blur of sin, to the bias of the selfish human heart, to the failure to see that truth must be not only clear in precept, but incarnate in character. It was necessary for one to come and put this truth into the life, and thus reveal its power to redeem and uplift into the fellowship of God. Christ alone has brought into human life the truth which is adequate to satisfy every need of the human soul, the truth which makes men free. It is evident to every student of history that Christ rises so far above every other teacher as to require a place in a class by Himself. He is "the Light of the world." But we have emphasized in a former chapter that Christ is the greatest specialist in character the world has known. "In

The fullness of the truth is in Christ.

Him was life, and the life was the light of men," says John the evangelist. We are to remember that this fact is vital in connection with all the teaching of Christ. When he said to men: "I am the way, the truth and the life," His claim to be the way to God rests in the fact that He lived the truth in His daily life. Therefore when men seek to know His truth, it must be recognized as having its proof in actual character.

The fact of incarnation is not of itself an evidence that the teaching is true. But it is the explanation of whatever power a teaching may have. Every incarnation has power in it. If the teaching which works its way into life be true, its effect is helpful in the life. But if it be false, its effect is hurtful. This is the explanation of whatever power may be discovered in any religion. It has been made flesh by those who believe it. They all have some truth, and in so far as this shall have its full effect, the result is blessed; but in so far as error finds place mixed with the truth, the result is a curse. Thus in various teachings the truth is so overlaid with error as to make the result of the teaching more hurtful in the end than helpful. The world has revealed the results of these various teachings, as we noted in the chapter on the Bible. The one only reasonable conclusion from the test, thus made in the life of the people of various faiths, is that Jesus Christ alone has

Every incarnation has power for good or ill.

brought us the truth in its fullness, for those people who come most nearly to a loyal obedience to His teachings, in their purity and simplicity, reveal a character more nearly Christ-like than any other. Let us then note the three great "glories" mentioned by John in the teachings and life of Christ.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

The first glory was that "as of the only begotten of the Father." It is the glory of the divine life. In it we find the revelation of sonship. We have shown in a previous chapter that explanation involves superiority. But this must mean that if ever man is to understand himself and his relation to God, there must be a revelation from God. Now if this revelation be embodied in human life, the simple necessity compels the recognition of the fact that such a Teacher must be more than a man. Moreover, if the object-lesson be for the purpose of making God known to men, it is also clear that such a person manifests God to men. The idea that such a transcendent person would be just a man is directly contrary to the scientific demand. If he be simply a man, he cannot explain man nor God. If no one superior to man has yet made God manifest, then man does not know God. But we have shown why it is reasonable to believe that God has made such a revelation of Himself as will meet man's need,

The reason why revelation

must come from one superior to man.

therefore the only reasonable view about the person in whom the revelation is made is that he is above man, and the manifestation of the very life of God. This is the only logical and scientific inference from all the facts set forth in the previous chapters.

Therefore our inquiry must be, Do we find any such unique and transcendant life in Christ which indicates a character above that of man, and in keeping with our conception of the character of God? For evidently our highest conception of God must be in the realm of character. Only thus can there be a self-revelation of spirit in the terms of moral quality in human life. Is it possible for men to conceive of a more perfect character than Christ's? Can we add anything to it, or take anything from it, which would make it more perfect? The verdict of the race and of history is clear. We cannot conceive of a more perfect character. But that must mean that we have in Christ the actual incarnation of the character of God, in so far as man can know God. As we study this character, let us remember it is not described for us in the New Testament, but that it is portrayed in the simple record of His words and acts. We have noted that the perfection of character is realized in the perfect obedience of law. Christ emphasized this, and claimed to obey the law of His Father perfectly. Moreover men agree that in no point is it

Christ's character could not be conceived as more perfect.

possible to indicate wherein Christ was not thus free from sin. He distinctly challenged men to point out the first sin in His life, and based this challenge upon His perfect character in order to make valid His claim that men should believe in Him, since His life proved Him to be true. (John 8: 42-46.) He taught others to pray for forgiveness, but He never did so Himself. The entire Gospel record reveals the atmosphere of His holy life, such as the world has never seen before or since.

But some one will ask: "If God be infinite, how can we think of Him as being self-limited and coming into the life of a man?" The answer comes clearly from the same point of view—If God be infinite, how can we conceive that He lacks the power of self-limitation in self-revelation? All creation is the evidence that God manifests Himself in limited forms. But the question and answer involve a further appreciation of the nature of spirit in relation to body and material media. Consider a man who is addressing an audience of ten thousand people. He is not limited to the physical measurements of the human skull. His invisible spirit is in vital and immediate communion with the invisible spirits of the ten thousand people within the reach of his voice. He is as really present at the farthest corner of that room as at the point from which he speaks. Or consider a man in New York speaking by telephone to a man in Chicago, recognizing the voice,

About the self limitation of the spirit.

talking as immediately this distance of a thousand miles as if the two were in the same room in either city. In fact both are in the same rooms in both cities. The importance of this fact must be emphasized, for it means that the spirit makes the body the basis of his activity, by which he is related to the physical limitations and media through which he speaks or acts. A man sits in his office, having the available means and influence, and says: "Let a house be built!" The house is built. Time is involved. The forests, the quarries, the mines yield their quota, and men are brought to the task; but all because of the fact that this human spirit said: "Let it be done!"

It is when we pause to appreciate the actual nature of spirit, and the fact that the activity of spirit power reaches beyond limitations once binding us to such a degree as to teach us that its nature is to work from the basis of physical media, rather than to be limited by these media;—it is when we realize this fact that we begin to appreciate the nature of the incarnation of Christ in the man of Nazareth. We are at once lifted above the superficial notions, sometimes voiced, about His limitations to the measurements of a human life and its environment. By so much as He knows the laws of nature better that we do, even as we know them so much better than our fathers did, so we can see that He, from the basis of a human life in Palestine, may

About the limitation of the spirit of Christ.

not have been limited anything like what some have supposed. The reach of His power, even in the days of His incarnation, may have involved far greater liberty than we can conceive, though we have the actual experience to realize how spirit enjoys such liberty as it transcends its material basis of activity. Here and there in the Gospel record we feel this evident reach of power in "the Master," exercising that power in His transcendent prerogative as the Son of the living God.

One of the most significant statements made by any man regarding Jesus Christ is that made by Napoleon at St. Helena. It was after his days of conquest were past, and all the glory of his earthly splendor was swiftly fading away. In answer to a question from General Bertrand, he said: "I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. Everything in Him astonishes me. Between Him and whoever else in the world there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by Himself. His birth and the history of His life, the profound character of His teachings, which grapple the mightiest difficulties with the most admirable solution, His Gospel, His empire, His march across the ages, everything is for me a prodigy which plunges me into reveries which I cannot escape. Here I see nothing human. For

Napoleon's conviction concerning Christ.

three hundred years spirit struggled against the brutality of sense, conscience against despotism, the soul against the body, virtue against all the vices. The blood of Christians flowed in torrents. They died kissing the hand which slew them. Everywhere Christians fell, and everywhere they triumphed. You speak of Cæsar, of Alexander, of their conquest, and of the enthusiasm which they enkindled in their soldiers. These, with Charlemagne and myself, founded great empires; but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His upon love; and to this day millions would die for him. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, adored, and which is extending over the whole earth!"

This conviction that Jesus was more than a man has marked the thinking world through the centuries. It is the transcendent character of His manhood which has convinced men of His place in the Godhead. Let us recall certain important facts which explain this belief in the deity of Christ. The moral atmosphere of the time must be remembered. In a former chapter we have noted the consciousness of sin, and the cry of despair among the men of prominence of the time. Josephus, the Jewish historian emphasizes the moral abominations which darkened his own country. In Palestine Galilee was disreputable, and in Galilee Nazareth was notorious for its ignorance and profligacy. "Can any good

thing come out of Nazareth?" was a question readily understood. Living in Nazareth through His boyhood and youth, Jesus came forth to face the people with such ideals of purity as no man had ever imagined before, with such conceptions of man's relations to God in intimate fellowship of holiness as no one had ever suggested before. Christ's teaching about the prayer-life which was the familiar experience of His own life in so marked a way that His disciples realized it to be the secret of His power, was a teaching which involved the fullest knowledge of God in the deepest realities of the soul. Let this be remembered. Not even Moses and the prophets begin to approach Christ in the revelation of God which comes through prayer to His children. Their teaching about prayer was most inadequate, as compared with that of Christ. His was simply the record of His daily experience. Out of Nazareth came this young man thus revealing to men this marvelous life in daily, complete fellowship with God.

The surroundings of the early life of Christ.

He appeared among men unknown, having no training in their schools. The great teachers of other peoples were trained at the feet of the greatest masters; but Jesus of Nazareth had no human teacher. No man can study His teachings without realizing that He did not need a human teacher. Not only so, but his public ministry of teaching and healing and helping men continued through the re-

markably short period of three years! This is perhaps the most extraordinary fact of all, from a human point of view. How soon, ordinarily, would any career of so brief a length of years, have been forgotten, especially as He built no material structure as a monument, and wrote no line with His own hand to preserve His teachings. His influence was of the purest spiritual kind. He used no force of arms, yet today, after nineteen centuries, His influence is greater than that of all other men combined in the history of the race. Nothing approaches this astonishing fact in the record of mankind.

His three years of public ministry without a human teacher.

We can understand why it was that the people wondered as He taught them as one having authority. The secret of His power as He spake was in the holiness of His life which the people felt. When He condemned their sin, men realized that they were facing one who could not be put aside with indifference. After they had heard Christ, it was either to hate the sin which He condemned, or to hate Him because they still loved their sin. It was this twofold result which marked the three years of His ministry. On the one hand, those who were ready to be honest and true forsook their sins and followed Him, while those who refused to be true clung to their sins and crucified Him. He claimed to be the long-promised Messiah whom God was to give to Israel. This claim was re-

Christ's claim to

be the Messiah of Israel.

ceived with incredulity by almost every one at the first. The teaching of John the Baptist opened the way with a small number of disciples, but they were very few. When He told them the Kingdom was not to be a material one, as they had hoped, but a spiritual one, they repudiated the very idea. As He told them of the Fatherhood of God, they wondered. Such a conception of God was revolutionary. The children were not allowed to name the name of Jehovah, but were taught another name to use in its stead. That they could come into a loving sonship with God was startling teaching indeed. He claimed to have come forth from God in order to bear witness to this truth, and to lift men into this glorious sonship, involving a life of righteousness and love of all that is worthy of the love of God.

The progress of development of the truth in the minds of those who heard Him is most important to appreciate. It is evident that men came to believe in the Fatherhood of God by becoming convinced that Christ was the Son of God. As He revealed a familiarity with God as His Father, they grew into the conviction that He knew God as they did not. As they saw Him go away for prayer, they felt the reality of His communion with God, such as they did not know. When He told them that He came forth from God, some of them stumbled, but

The growth of

others felt His God-consciousness, felt that he was a citizen of two worlds,

the conviction that His claim was true.

that He was as well acquainted with His Father in the heavens, as with His disciples on earth. They knew His ideals were far above anything their human nature had ever conceived. As the days went by, they came to the compelling conviction that He was not only greater than any prophet, but the very Son of God, as He claimed. Therefore when the question was asked them, "Whom do men say that I am?" they told Him how some declared Him to be one of the great prophets; but when He pressed the inquiry home to their own hearts, Peter, their spokesman exclaimed: "We believe, and we are sure, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" That was a joyous day for Christ. For this He had come, that men might see the sonship in Him, and be brought into the fellowship of God. This is the explanation of that glad reply: "Blessed art thou Simon, Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father in heaven." At the very moment when they acknowledged His claim to be true, He emphasized the reality of it regarding the sonship with God which He was thus revealing to them.

But another fact appears in this teaching of Christ. He rises sheer above the lines of nationality, and gives to men a religion of universal character. Other religions have been provincial. Their founders have not conceived of a world-movement, based on God's thought of the whole world. But

this is the thought of Christ, as He said: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "I am the light of the world." "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Ignoring sectional prejudices and errors, He stood forth, not a Jew, but the universal man. True worship and godly virtue were both unknown to the multitudes of men. The pride of the human heart, the doctrine of retaliation, the spirit of war ruled everywhere. He taught the greatness of humanity and the saving power of love. To both Jew and Gentile it was an unwelcome message. But He brought a new conscience to men, and the power of His truth won them to the new teaching and the new life. It all took meaning in that it was the truth of God concerning man, and that the new life was to be lived unto God. The reality and greatness of the spiritual life appeared, as men had never understood it before; and when out of it all He pointed them to eternal life for the immortal spirits of the redeemed, He drew back the veil of the unknown and gave them a vision of the sonship which shone with an increasing glory in the thought of an abiding fellowship with God.

The matchless character of the teaching of Christ.

When all these teachings are studied in their full significance, in contrast with the noblest teachings of others, the superiority of the revelation of God

and of character which we have in Christ becomes immediately apparent. The best of the teachings of others are few and fragmentary. Christ gave us one continuous and harmonious compendium of truth, matchless and complete. They had, as we have noted, great teachers among men. Christ was not taught of man. Yet His ideals can be found nowhere else in all the world's thought. They transcend the highest levels of human thinking, as represented in all the centuries. But more than this, Christ lived His own teachings about character. He realized His own ideal, and men saw it complete in His daily life. It was one long manifestation of the joy and victory which comes to one who knows the sonship of God. It was His relation to His Father all the way along which explained everything. Let one study the whole Gospel record and discover how the God-consciousness of Christ breathes through it from first to last. Let this be remembered. It is the fact that Christ was revealing God to men that we are emphasizing, and this revelation could only come as men realized that Christ was filled with the very life of God. No man can study the Gospels without being convinced of this reality. It saturates and penetrates the whole life which lives through the written record. The living "Word" is God speaking, and the presence of God is the living presence which all men see whenever and wherever they touch Christ, listen to

Sonship with God shone out in all He said and did.

His teaching, and watch His ministry of love. When a man puts forth the assertion that Jesus was a dreamer, and was mistaken when he claimed to have come forth from God, it is evidence that such an one has never studied the Gospels with the true desire to enter into the secret of this holy character. We have noted the scientific character of spiritual discernment which comes from living into the life of a great master. Here that truth applies. It is when a man aspires, above everything else, to possess a character like that of Christ, that the reality and power of Christ's life, as being filled with the very life of God, will appear.

Again let us remember that explanation involves superiority. Christ alone explains man and gives to man an explanation of God. Such power of knowledge, such spiritual preeminence, such holy living, such universal sweep of vision, such transcendent personality, were impossible to a merely human mind judged by every other man ever known. Christ is in a class by Himself, as Napoleon said. His life of victory over sin was explained by nothing other than His abiding fellowship in the love of His Father, in which He perfectly manifested the will of God to men. It was all so perfectly natural. There was no strained effort to show God to men.

Nothing explains Christ except His

The manifestation simply shone out because the life was suffused with its blessed reality. Every man that

touched Him felt the majesty of His more than human personality. Therefore when He told His disciples that His religion would fill all the earth, they felt the need of it in all the world, and the certainty that He knew whereof He spake. His utter absence of selfish ambition, together with His serene confidence that He would win the world, bespeak a certainty of knowledge which is the inspiration of His people forever. For that certainty is not simply in word, but in the experience of the victory which follows His truth into life, and the certainty that His truth will fill the earth. We shall speak in the next division of this chapter of His victory over death; but we desire at this time to point to the fact that the only adequate explanation of His life is the manifest revelation that God filled His life, as the life of no other man before or since has been filled with God.

Sonship with God.

We come now to consider the questions which have already arisen in the minds of some. Many seem to stumble at the statement in the Gospel record that Jesus was born of the virgin Mary. Let the reader turn to the Gospel according to Luke, and study with care the first two chapters and six verses of the third chapter. It is to be noted that Luke takes pains to declare that he is making a careful record of facts about which he has direct information from those who "from the beginning were eye-witness, and ministers of the word," and

that he "had perfect understanding of all things from the very first." Then he proceeds to tell of the birth of John the Baptist and of Jesus. This can only mean that he has had his information from Elizabeth and Mary. But Luke has given us a few plain evidences of his historic accuracy, which are important in view of the query as to how accurate he may be. In the third chapter Luke describes a combination of rulers in Rome and Palestine, in order to fix a certain year in the record. This combination was so unusual that it excited curiosity among scholars. Investigation revealed the perfect accuracy of Luke's history. It is this sort of historian who has given us the record of the virgin-birth. But some have felt it impossible for them to believe in such a miracle. It is only necessary to remind such that there was a first man who had neither human father or mother. Once realize that, and then remember the significance in the fact that Christ is called the "second Adam" through the New Testament. Further, when we realize the character of Christ's life, which we have just tried to describe so imperfectly, it remains to be said that it is more reasonable to believe in the fact of the virgin-birth, than to question it. The life itself is so much more wonderful than the manner of His birth.

The teaching concerning the virgin birth of Jesus.

Again there are those who find difficulty in the mystery of the union of the human and divine in

Jesus of Nazareth. But we have an illustration of a union just as mysterious, within human experience, namely, the union of body and spirit in man. So men beheld this union in Christ. They realized that He was human, and in so far one with men; yet they felt that in Him men became one with God, because the divine was there. In fact there is a great truth set forth in Christ which is to be realized in every redeemed human life. We have seen in all creation that God reveals Himself in various forms of His creation, and that in so doing God unfolds a process in which He is giving more and more of His life to His creatures, until in man He bestows a fullness of spiritual capacity such as was not given to any lower creature. Moreover we are given the clear teaching that it is the purpose of God to give to men still more of His indwelling in the larger life of the redeemed. That is to say, there is a capacity in human nature to receive the indwelling life of God. There is an affinity in the spirit nature between the divine and human. This is the affinity between Fatherhood and Sonship. But we are able to see in a great measure how Christ is just this fullness of union made manifest. He continues to preserve this union, and those who are adopted into the sonship with Him, and are joint heirs with Him, have been given the right to come into this complete indwelling of the life of God. Again we note the scien-

The union of the human and divine in Christ.

tific character of spiritual discernment. It is a truth in Christ which those appreciate best who have entered into His own experience somewhat in fellowship with God.

But the most serious difficulty to many is the problem of the trinity, or tri-unity of the Godhead. Let it be emphasized that the evangelical Christian church does not teach that there are three Gods, nor that there are three persons in one person, as if the term "person" were used in the same sense in both cases. The teaching is that there is one God, but that there are three persons in the Godhead.

The mystery of the Trinity.

The reason Christians believe this teaching about God is because it is clearly and positively taught by Jesus Christ. He speaks of the Father and of the Spirit as separate individuals, and yet as being one and the same God, and of Himself as being one with the Father and one with the Spirit. Perhaps we may find some help in the effort to apprehend this mystery, if we study some suggestions in the realm of nature. We have noted in a former chapter that nature has given us some evidences of the character of the being of God.

One of the insoluble mysteries to the human mind is the mystery of being. In the world of being we find the three facts of law, manifestation and force. Law is the eternal thought, the truth about being, the ultimate reality, the determining idea in the divine mind. The Greek philosophers called this

ultimate thought the Logos, the "word," and this is the term which John uses, when he says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Fichte said: "The law of the universe is God." But law is not all of God. In addition to law there is the manifestation of its working, and the manifestation of its working involves the revelation of force. This law points us to the Being whom Christ calls "Father." The universe of worlds is bound up in Him as a unit, in Him are their affairs harmonized and administered. The manifestation of law is the embodiment of thought in form and material substance. It is the revelation of the truth as to the reality of being, and the necessities involved as to the permanency of being. These manifestations, as we have noted, involve a progress of development, until we have the highest and complete manifestation of the character of God in the character of Jesus Christ. John tells us the "Word" was with God, and that "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Christ was the truth expressed in terms of human life. He was the "Word" spoken. We read in the Epistle to the Hebrews that "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son." Just as the law is expressed on lower levels of creation, so it is expressed on the

An illustration from the world of being.

higher level of character. John says we beheld in Him "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Christ is the manifestation of God to men.

But in the world of being this manifestation of law is a revelation of force. Here also force is lower and higher. We have noted in a former chapter that Alfred Russell Wallace points out the fact that the only force men understand is will-force. From this fact Mr. Wallace argues that we are compelled scientifically to infer that at the last analysis all force is will-force. That is to say, as we have noted heretofore, it is the power of the Spirit. But this therefore means that when we speak of the power of God revealed in the manifestation of law, working out into form and substance, as the Spirit of God, we are in exact accord with the fact as we know it in the nature of being.

The world of being involves a Trinity.

The Bible teaches that in the creation "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:2.) So all through the Scriptures the teaching is that the Spirit is the creative, regenerative, sanctifying force, working according to the law, on the various levels of the manifestation of divine power. Now when we unite these three principles, found in all nature, we discover the very conditions of the universe to be such that there can be no perfect Deity without a Trinity. They are not one first and three afterwards, but three in one always and

forever. But while this illustration suggests a truth about the nature of being which may illuminate the mystery of the trinity in the Godhead, yet the reason we believe in the tri-unity of God, as was said, is because it is clearly taught by Jesus Christ. He has given us reason to believe that He knows, and He has given us reason to trust Him. We think of the Father as God in the heavens, of the Son as God with us, and of the Spirit as God in us. It is because of all that we have noted of the more than human Christ that we rest in His teaching concerning His oneness with the ever living God.

In his recent book *Things Fundamental,* Dr. Chas. E. Jefferson points out that the Christian centuries have seen schools of men come and go who have insisted that a lower conception of Christ must be held than that set forth in the New Testament, and held by the overwhelming majority of Christians from the beginning. These schools have never flourished with abiding power. It will suffice for us to refer here to the Unitarian movement in New England, which began about one hundred years ago. For a few years it seemed as if it would sweep the country. Indeed its adherents prophesied that in fifty years the Evangelical faith would be gone. Today there are about seventy thousand Unitarians in the whole land, and more than ten millions of Evangelical Christians. Through all the Christian na-

Lower conceptions of Christ have never satisfied the Christian world.

tions the overwhelming majority are Trinitarians. The lower conception of Christ has had a fair trial, and has been repudiated by the Christian Church. It is the Trinitarian Christian Church which has revealed that vitalizing power of God which is spreading the Gospel of Christ, with redeeming effect, throughout all the earth, as no lower conception of Christ has ever been able to do. We cannot deny that this is a mighty witness to the truth. It is incredible that God would continue to bless a delusion, and gird with power a false notion about Jesus Christ, while the truth languishes and dies. All our previous study reveals the fact that the human heart cannot be satisfied with anything else than the living God. That revelation of God which is in Jesus Christ has ever satisfied the deepest longings and loftiest aspirations of every man who has desired a character like unto that of Christ. As Principal Fairbairn has said: "Christ is the one Being needful for all men everywhere. No one can take His place or do His work. He stands alone. No one cometh unto the Father but by Him. To receive or reject Him is to receive or reject God." As we recall the truth and life which the world beholds in Him, we begin to appreciate that sublime statement of the Apostle Paul, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily." (Col. 2; 9.) It is out of that life filled with the indwelling life of God, the Father speaks ever to men saying: "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him!"

THE ATONEMENT BY CHRIST.

This wondrous life of Christ commands our adoration, but man has proved his inability to live it of himself. The touch of death is upon mankind. The sinner is not at peace with God. He has broken his character in the violation of the law, and has become estranged from God, remaining self-condemned in the consciousness of his guilt and sin. How can he ever come into this life of victory and power revealed in Christ? The answer is to be found in Christ Himself. There is another glory shining in the life of Christ, the glory of the divine love. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3: 16.) "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. . . . Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us." (1 John 4: 10 and 3: 16.) In Romans 3: 23-26 the Apostle Paul tells us "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time, His righteousness;

The love of God revealed in His gift of Christ.

that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." These teachings of Scripture set forth the truth concerning that work accomplished by Christ which is called the work of atonement, to the end that we may be forgiven for all sin, become reconciled to God, and enter into the blessings of sonship with God as they are revealed to us in Christ.

It is this subject of the atonement by Christ that we are now to study. Why was it necessary? There are some who contend that it is not necessary. They insist that men do not need any such work of Christ on their behalf. They argue that God simply asks men to repent of sin and give a loving obedience to Him, and when this is done, nothing remains necessary to bring man into fullest fellowship with God. But this view is superficial, and does not appreciate all the demands in the case. Repentance because of sin is not enough. Those who contend for its sufficiency believe in Jesus as a teacher, perhaps a teacher sent from God; but do not believe in Him as a Savior whose salvation consists primarily in His work of atonement for us, which is always involved in all the teaching wherein He tells us of the love of God. The message of forgiveness always rests in the fact that it is through Christ that we have it offered to us. That faith in Christ which is necessary to man's reconciliation to God must appreciate the truth that but for the atonement accom-

The necessity for the atonement.

plished by Christ, revealing the forgiving love of God for men, there could not be a way of salvation from sin. We must now see that this is not an arbitrary statement; but is the truth which is involved in the very necessity of the nature of God Himself, and in the nature of man as well. The subject is of vital importance to every living man. Too many have been satisfied to neglect it, and have never appreciated its real character.

This is a problem in the realm of government. It transcends the immediate relation of the individual sinner to God. Sin is something more than a sin against God. It involves the moral government of the race. The scientific method of approach to the study must be by noting the demands which are made upon human governments in dealing with a criminal. Certain necessities rest upon human governments in working out the whole problem of dealing with one who has violated the law.

The problem of the atonement one of government.

The same necessity must exist in God's government of the race. Is it sufficient in human government to proclaim that pardon waits for every repentant criminal? Manifestly not. The place of law, the value of law, would cease. Law would have no restraining potency when coupled with such a proclamation. It would simply be good advice and nothing more. Exceptional instances of clemency on the part of a civil governor are by no means to be taken as illustrative of the possibility of pardon;

for our problem must involve all criminals who repent, and must secure to all alike the offer of pardon and freedom.

There is a remarkable incident in the history of government, which is calculated to serve as a valuable illustration of the necessity of the atonement. The Locrian king, Zaleucus, gave their first code of written laws to the Greeks about 660 B. C. This code was so excellent that Demosthenes referred to the Locri as furnishing a model of good government. The people were jealous of their laws and proud of their governmental life. In the code of Zaleucus the penalty for adultery was the loss of both eyes. The son of the king was proven guilty of this sin. Special stress had been laid upon the necessity of obeying this law of purity, for the sake of the home, and for the sake of developing a high standard of virtue among the people. What should be done? The son was truly repentant, and pledged himself to future obedience. But was it sufficient for the king simply to pardon his son, and declare that nothing more was necessary? The king loved his son, and wished to pardon him; but if nothing more were done, the law would be discredited. Not to enforce the law would be nothing less than to admit that it was not important enough to maintain. But this would be unjust to the people, and to their appreciation of the vital importance of purity, and to their system of government.

The historic illustration of Zaleucus and his son.

If the son of Zaleucus were thus freely pardoned, and no penalty required because of his sin, it was certain that every other citizen who was guilty of the same sin must be likewise freely pardoned, if penitent. But in this the king would do great injustice to his own character, for he abhorred this sin, and if he should pardon his son, without in any way showing his abhorrence of the crime, he would be untrue both to himself and to his people. The necessity was upon the king to do something to show that the sin was condemned and could not be condoned. Moreover it must be checked or the kingdom would be ruined. Something must be done that would deter the people from repeating the sin, something that would honor the law, something that would show the true mind of the king, something that would preserve the welfare of the people. All this was absolutely necessary to good government. Was there any way to accomplish all this and yet, at the same time, allow the king, in his great love for his son, to pardon that son, or to remit the penalty? The king himself found the way. He caused one of his son's eyes to be put out, and one of his own eyes to be put out as well. This was a partial execution of the penalty, and a partial atonement by the king in behalf of the son. It was all of love, not simply the love of the son, but also the love of the law of purity, the love of his people, and the love of

Something more than repentance necessary to justify pardon.

the moral government which was vitally necessary to the continuance of the life of his people in their purity.

Now how did this vicarious atonement on the part of Zaleucus satisfy all the requirements in the case? The answer is that it accomplished everything that the enforcement of the penalty of the violated law would have done. As king and law-giver he could not be true to himself unless he honored the law by maintaining it as necessary to the moral life of his people. The free pardon of the penitent son was not enough to accomplish this. Something more must be done to show the king's abhorrence of the sin, and to tend to deter the people from repeating the crime. The execution of the penalty would have shown all this, and would have been the strictest justice. But love sought a way to be just to the law, and also justified in offering pardon to the penitent son. The suffering of the king accomplished this. The people realized the truth about all the interests involved as fully as if the penalty had been executed. Nay, the king's willingness to suffer thus, because of his love for the law, as well as because of his love for his son, revealed to his people the necessity of condemning sin and maintaining righteousness, even while pardon was granted to the penitent. Had the king offered to have both of his own eyes put out, in order to save the eyes of his son, the

The vicarious suffering of the king honored the law.

significance of all that was upheld by his action would have been the more earnestly intensified. In this actual instance in history we behold the necessity of atonement in government, where men appreciate all the profound meaning of law and of life in which character is the obedience freely and lovingly given to law. Sin makes atonement necessary in order that any part of the execution of the law may be withheld, so that pardon may justly be offered to penitent men.

Now this is exactly the case in the government of God. Yet it is at this point of the necessity which rests upon God to uphold His law of righteousness, because of His love of righteousness and because of His love for men, that so many have failed utterly to appreciate the absolute necessity of the atonement. No man will hesitate to say that God must, to maintain His government, do all that the Locrian king did. Without an adequate atonement God's government could not stand under the proclamation of pardon for every penitent soul. This is the truth stated in that passage in Romans 3:23-26. The deep sense of justice in the human heart, revealed long ago in ancient Greece, still feels that sin cannot be so freely pardoned as to suggest that God condones sin and is not concerned to maintain His law of righteousness. It is perfectly clear that forgiveness would be impossible for God, so long as God is true to Himself, ex-

God could not offer

pardon to men without an atonement.

cept an atonement should open the way for love to be both just to the law of righteousness and justified in offering pardon to penitent sinners. This is the atonement which Jesus Christ accomplished in His life and death. His coming into the realm of human life had its distinctive purpose in this necessity to manifest to men the love of God, both for His law of righteousness and for His human children. And we must see that it was not enough for Christ to obey the law perfectly. That would secure the commendation of God, that would indeed honor the law; but God's attitude toward sin must be made plain, and God's abhorrence of sin could only be unmistakably taught by the suffering of His Son. It must be made plain that God can never be reconciled to sin, so that the manifestation in the atonement would actually prove to deter men from sin.

Let us therefore realize what is involved in an intelligent faith in Jesus Christ, and in genuine repentance toward God because of sin. The popular thought about it all is pitifully superficial. An intelligent faith in Jesus Christ realizes that Christ came into the flesh because the atonement was necessary. All that Christ taught on this subject enters into faith's appreciation of Him as the only Saviour. In the tenth chapter of John He teaches that "the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." But let every man realize that this is a vacarious offering of Himself which

Intelligent faith sees

Christ as the atoning Saviour.

Christ makes. Note His words: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Intelligent faith recognizes that no man can be reconciled unto God unless he accepts the atonement which God has provided in His Son, and realizes the absolute necessity for such atonement. It is this that enables him to see that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour, because it is through His redeeming love that men have the way of forgiveness and peace and hope revealed. That attitude of men which contends that no atonement has been necessary, and that no atonement has occurred, betrays the failure to apprehend the necessity which inheres in the very nature of God of making it clear that He can never be reconciled to sin, and that His pardon cannot mean that sin is condoned one whit. Otherwise He would cease to be God. This superficial theory is based upon an inadequate conception of the profound significance of God's responsibility to His universe, in being faithful to which He must maintain righteousness and condemn sin.

In fact when these advocates of repentance would have us suppose that nothing more than repentance is necessary to pardon, they betray the lack of appreciation of the real nature of genuine repentance. It is nothing less than a realization, to a greater or

less extent, of what our sin is in the sight of God, how it violates His holiness, how it wounds His love. Prof. Denny has stated the case powerfully thus: "Such consciousness it is not in the power of the sinner to produce at will. The more deeply he has sinned, the less repentance is in his power. Hence only through a revelation of God, and especially of what God is in relation to sin, can repentance be evoked in the soul. . . . A demonstration of love, too, must be given in act. It is not enough to be told that God loves. The reality of love lies in another region than that of words. In Christ on His cross the very thing is present, beyond all hope of telling wonderful, and without its irresistible appeal, our hearts could never have been melted to penitence, and won for God. . . . The self-centered regret which a man feels when his sin has found him out, the wish, (compounded of pride, shame and anger at his own inconceivable folly,) that he had not done it, these are spoken of as repentance. But they are not repentance at all. They have no relation to God. They constitute no fitness for a new relation to Him. They are not the opening of the heart in the direction of His reconciling love. It is the simple truth that the sorrow of heart, that healing and sanctifying pain in which sin is really put away, is not ours in independence of God; it is a saving grace which

The vision of the atonement essential to a genuine repentance.

is begotten in the soul under the impression of sin, which it owes to the revelation of God in Christ."

But faith goes past the cross to the broken tomb, in the appreciation of our mighty Saviour. It is very important to remember that one can scarcely discover the mention of the death of Christ in the New Testament without also finding accompanying it the statement concerning His resurrection from the dead. The atonement was a victory over sin and death. When we recall the marvelous life which we contemplated in the previous section of this chapter, we are not surprised at the assertion of the Apostle Peter, that "it was not possible that He should be holden of death." (Acts 2 : 24.) The life of the living God was His, and in the consciousness of that He declared that He had power to lay down His life and take it again. The historic fact of the resurrection of Christ is the very foundation of the Christian's faith. All the New Testament teaching as to the fact becomes undoubted reality because a living faith in the living Christ becomes conscious of the power to conquer sin, and to bring us into the fellowship of the living God. Thus the work of the atonement becomes effective to the penitent believer, as he rejoices in God's forgiving love, and enters into His fellowship and peace, and begins to learn the meaning of sonship.

Christ's resurrection the victory over sin.

There is a teaching in the New Testament regard-

ing the way this atonement accomplished for us by Christ becomes actually efficient in our lives. The result intended by God in all this work of Christ is that we should be received into His sonship. John tells us of Christ that "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not; but to as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God." (John 1:12.) The word which describes this experience of entering into the sonship is the word "adoption." The Apostle Paul has given this word its fullest meaning in his letter to the Romans. In order to appreciate the helpfulness of this teaching to the people of his time, we must remember that Roman citizenship was counted the highest possible blessing. It was the dream of every one who was not a citizen that he would some day become one. The law which regulated the transaction was one of the items of general knowledge in every part of the empire. The general thought in the epistle to the Romans is that sinners are aliens from the household of God, are reconciled through Christ, and are adopted as children into the household of faith. Certain facts about the Roman law are very significant in connection with this teaching. By adoption a slave was made free and became a citizen as well as a son. By adoption a stranger was received into the life of the family exactly as if he had been born into it, and received all the rights of a child, and all the privileges of a

The adoption into sonship and into citizenship.

citizen, taking the name of the adopting citizen. It was a customary thing for one who was thus adopted out of slavery into freedom, into sonship and citizenship, to say, "I was born again on that day."

A most interesting fact in the Roman law throws additional light upon this teaching. The law of inheritance among the Hebrews was that of primogeniture, by which the first born son received the property, and the remaining children had no part in it, unless by special provision. But according to the Roman law every child was an heir equally with every other. The moment a child was born, he became an heir. Hence the significance of Paul's words in Rom. 8: 14-17, where he says: "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Another factor in the Roman law was the requirement that a witness should be present and state that the citizen on the one hand offered the adoption to the slave, and that the slave agreed to meet the requirements, to take the citizen's name, and enter into the life of the family. So again we understand Paul's statement "the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." Nothing could be more beautiful to the thought of the people of the New Testament time than this teaching, so readily understood by all, of what it meant to be "born again," and adopted out of the slavery of sin into the freedom of sonship, and the blessings

The inheritance and the witness of the spirit to the child of God in adoption.

of citizenship, through Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. This was what John had in mind when he said Christ gave to as many as received Him "the right to become the sons of God," and this is what the Apostle Peter had in mind when he wrote of God "having begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Thus is the atonement made effective by the adoption into the sonship of God. The attempt to measure the truth of this deliverance from the slavery of sin causes the responsive soul to leap with unspeakable joy because of God's unspeakable gift, and to join in that ascription of praise which is recorded in the apocalypse, where they cried unto the Lamb: "Thou are worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

THE REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST.

The third glory specified by the beloved disciple is the glory of the fulness of the divine truth. It is not enough to be adopted into sonship. We must grow into the realization of this wondrous relation to God. We have noted that the real explanation of Christ's matchless life was His ability to say "My Father" to God, and of God to men, and to know

all that it meant. Just so we see that it is Christ's plan for us that we should learn to say "Our Father" to God, and of God to each other. This suggests the place of prayer in the Christian life, which we shall discuss in the next chapter; but it also suggests that very much is necessary in the development of the child of God before he shall grow into an increasing fullness of fellowship. It need scarcely be said that we are to take Christ as our Guide and Elder Brother in this growth. There is a faith which accepts Christ, but which hesitates to follow Him. Yet unless the believer will do more than simply begin, no progress is possible. Bishop Thoburn has told of an orphan boy who was adopted into a family, to whom the father tried to make it plain that he was to be treated just like the other children. Matters went very well during the first day, but at bed-time the children all came naturally and lovingly to receive from their parents the good-night kiss. The newly-adopted son was not ready for this, and held back. But as the days went by he entered more and more into all the life of the family, and the time came when the good-night kiss was as natural to him as to the others. So God would have us realize the sonship.

Adoption must be followed by growth into sonship.

The Apostle Paul gives us the point of connection between the work of Christ for us and our life in Him, in Gal. 2:19-20, where he says: "I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto

God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me." This points us back to that conversation which Christ had with His disciples, when He was leaving them, and was making clear to them the necessary conditions to growth in the life which He had revealed to them, and was offering to them. In John 15:1-11, Christ points out the necessity of an abiding fellowship with Him, like unto the vital union between the vine and the branches. We know perfectly that the only scientific attitude toward the attainment of success in anything is to discover the plain condition to that success, and immediately and energetically enter upon the task of meeting those conditions. There must be that quality of faith which shines in fidelity. There must be an enthusiasm which absorbs the life in the intensest concentration of the energies of the soul. Paul describes the Christian in the terms of the race, where the runner strains all his powers to reach the goal. Moreover the secret of the highest success is always in the fact that the victorious man loves the thing so thoroughly that he perseveres unto the end.

No man attains without meeting the conditions of success.

The first essential to this abiding in Christ, as the condition to the realization of sonship, is knowledge. Without intelligent appreciation of the nature

and value of a mode of life, its helpful development is impossible. "This is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." (John 17:3.) In his second epistle, the Apostle Peter arrests our thought by the emphasis which he lays upon this essential: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as His divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." It is the scientific demand everywhere that a man who hopes to be masterful in any profession must know the books which contain the necessary knowledge. The absurdity of a man imagining that he could be a physician or lawyer without knowing the books we all instantly admit; yet it is actually true that thousands who have begun the Christian life have never taken the matter seriously enough to study the Bible, which is the rule of faith and life for men. It is a wonderful tribute to the power of the Bible to note how many do grow into something of effective Christian lives even though they have a very superficial knowledge of the Word of God. To have a faith in Christ which shall be victorious it is perfectly apparent that one must know the living Word through the written Word. No Christian ever developed spiritual power who was not a student of the Bible. It is the bread of life to thousands who

Knowledge essential to the realization of sonship.

hunger after righteousness. There are in these days many helps at hand for every intelligent man who wishes to secure, in the most systematic and useful way, an adequate knowledge of the truth which makes us free.

The necessity rests upon the Christian to realize his responsibility as a recipient, which we have emphasized in a former chapter. To each one of us Christ offers the fullness of His life, not simply the taste of its blessedness. It is as if a man offered a friend a million dollars, and the friend would take a few hundreds, and live on as if there were nothing more to take, while the giver continued to make the offer, saying: "All the rest of this is yours to receive. Are you not going to take more?" Who can imagine the thought of Christ as He looks upon our indifference to His wonderful riches of grace available for us, because we are absorbed in some desire which is utterly unworthy of the immortal soul! Moreover Christ summons us to a service which shall at once develop in us a character increasingly like His own, and equip us to be His witnesses to all men in the earth. There is a kingdom to be built.

We are responsible in view of the offer of grace by Christ.

The truth must be given to men until its fulness shall be the glory of their life. The world is thronging with problems. Not one of them can fail to find its solution in the teachings of Jesus Christ. The business of the Christian is to be a witness to this truth with such power as to help men

everywhere to see the necessity of accepting Christ as their Saviour. We have noted the necessity of the incarnation of Christ, because it is in the life that the light ever shines with power. But here we see the necessity of the incarnation of Christ over again in the life of each and every one of His followers. God's revelation of life must be a character. Hence Christ. But the revelation must always continue to be character. Hence Christians. When Christ said: "I am the Light of the world," (John 9:5), He also said to His disciples: "Ye are the light of the world." (Matt. 5:11-16.) Phillips Brooks was right when he said "the great argument is not a syllogism: it is a man."

Furthermore the Apostle Paul shows, in Rom. 10:8-15, that since men must know in order to believe, the responsibility rests upon all who know Christ to impart that knowledge to those who are still in darkness. Every man who receives Christ becomes a trustee to give Christ to others. In the business world a trustee has a peculiar sense of honor constraining him to be faithful to his trust. Just this same high sense of honor must be in the heart of every trustee of the Gospel of Christ. This obligation is one strangely ignored by men and women who would never dream of refusing to pay a note for ninety days at the bank. But this obligation to Christ is vitally real, and the recognition of it gladly is absolutely necessary to the redemption of

The high sense of honor which a trustee of the Gospel

should have.

the race from sin unto God. Paul felt it as he cried: "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16), and again when he said: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. . . . For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salavtion to every one that believeth; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." God still presses His claim upon us in Christ, just as He pressed it upon Paul. The realization of sonship can only come to the soul who accepts it as a joyous privilege and a loving service.

In still another figure the Christian is likened to a soldier. In our time nothing is more needed than to have this idea of the Christian life revived in the popular thought. The soldier enlisted, taking his life in his hand, for the purpose of enduring hardship even unto death for the sake of the cause which he deemed worthy of such devotion. It was distinctively an emptying of self, and a welcoming of privation. In the civil war, as the calls for more volunteers were repeated, men left their ordinary vocations by the thousands, and girded themselves for battle. Wives and mothers, sisters and daughters said: "Go! we will manage somehow." Current fashions had no fascination for them at that time. Something really vital to the nation's welfare was at stake. Nothing

The Christian must gladly endure hardness as a good soldier.

less than this spirit must be revived among the followers of Jesus Christ, who loved not His life even unto death that we might live through Him. He bore his cross for us. Shall we not bear our cross in His fellowship of suffering, in order to labor together with Him unto the great victory which He will one day see over the forces of sin?

Such growth in fidelity and in power, through self-denial and glad devotion to the Master, can only be realized, as has been said, when the beginner, who has come to Christ, stays with Christ all the way. Many have heard Christ say: "Come unto me," and have heeded; who however have not heard Him say: "Abide in me." They are only babes in sonship, and never come to strength of character or influence. Yet they sometimes wonder why they do not grow strong in the Christian life. Such a situation is pathetic when we realize the childishness of the query, as if there were any reason to expect to grow strong by such methods as they adopt. They are putting no such thought and energy into this business of developing Christian character, as they put into the developing of other things. In the next two chapters we are to study further this subject from the two points of view of the individual Christian, and the world's redemption. But let us see just here how plainly the necessity appears which requires every soul adopted into sonship to grow into the fullness of the redemption through Christ in

Constant abiding in Christ the reasonable necessity.

order to the realization of the sonship of God in such measure as God intends for men.

Let the reader review the marginal index of this chapter, in order to pass in swift outline the whole movement of the thought which presents the reasonableness of our faith in Christ as the incarnate Son of God, and the atoning Saviour of men, who seeks to have us enter into His sonship. Probably the first impression made by the mere act of the review will be that a little time is required. That suggests that time is required for the spiritual exercise necessary to grow into the fellowship of Christ. We must not pass from this last division with its suggestions of the conditions of Christian growth, without laying stress upon this great necessity. God must have time with us, if He is to reveal Himself to our inmost souls. Friendship is impossible except time be given to its cultivation. It required three years of constant staying with Christ on the part of His disciples in order that they might secure enough knowledge of Him to enable them to go on in fellowship with Him through His abiding Spirit. A college student considers it reasonable to give one or two hours every day, for several years, in order to master the Latin language. A musician counts it necessary to devote at least five hours a day to practice, if proficiency in execution is to be maintained. But how then dare we hope to realize proficiency and power in Chris-

Time must be devoted to the faithful cultivation of the Christian life.

tian service unless we give the time necessary to its cultivation? No argument can stand before God to justify the neglect of this devotion of time, for no time can be so well spent; and here, as elsewhere, the will never fails to find the way.

Once more, let us realize that this programme of service laid down for us in the New Testament is not one to be dreaded. It is the most blessed of all possible experiences for the human soul. Men are anxious to be happy and joyful, and the pursuit of happiness is absorbing thousands who are following false trails in the search of it. When Christ gave us the programme which leads to the truly blessed life, He emphasized from first to last that this was the way of blessedness and of unspeakable joy. In what are called "The Beattitudes" these steps in the progress of building Christian character, and rendering Christian service, are revealed. It is the beatific vision which is involved in them, and it is the beatific life which they describe. (Matt. 5: 3-16.) Paul's emphasis upon the deepest meaning of sonship is in this that "we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." It is this that makes us the children of God, and joint heirs with Christ. (Rom. 8: 17.) It was a great work of vicarious atonement which has saved us from the slavery of sin. Therefore it is a cross of suffering which is in the way to every man's crown. But beyond it is the crown.

This life is most joyous in its precious blessings.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN PRAYER.

VIII.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN PRAYER.

The realization of the sonship of God, through Christ, on the part of men involves development along two lines of growth: first, that of the individual, in the development of the whole man into an increasing personal fellowship with God; second, that of the race, in the spread of the truth as it is in Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth. In this chapter and the next we shall consider these two movements. Moreover this two-fold development is to be in point of time in the earth, and also to extend beyond the limitations of earthly conditions into the continued existence of the immortal spirit, through the redemption of Christ. As the first six chapters led up to the study of the person and work of Christ, so these three succeeding chapters involve considerations which flow out of His life and work. Thus the fulness of the glory of the divine truth, instructive, redemptive, constructive, becomes manifest to the world. In the fourth division of the last chapter we have emphasized in a general way the truth which teaches our dependance upon Christ in all this growth, and especially the

The purpose of the three remaining chapters.

only true spirit which should mark our purpose and endeavor to realize the blessings of the life of the redeemed in Him. Again we venture to urge the most earnest spirit in this study, the constant desire to apply the truth immediately in our own lives, and the unceasing purpose to possess for our own this blessed life.

It may seem strange to some, at first thought, that we should approach the study of the realization of sonship with God in the individual life by the pathway of prayer. But we believe the study itself will vindicate the method. It will be necessary, however, to regard prayer as something much more comprehensive than many have supposed. We are to think of it as involving the whole life of the Christian. We sometimes speak of the prayer-life of the follower of Christ, the child of God. This prayer-life is all involved in the scientific belief in prayer. In this subject, as in all others, our final teacher is Christ our Saviour. Having established the fact that Christ is the greatest specialist in prayer, our scientific method, as noted heretofore, is at once clear. We must learn from Him, for He knows the whole subject in its realities, as no one else can. Just as every student, at the first, must rely upon the statements of his teacher, until he has verified them for himself; so the follower of Christ must receive His teachings in the confidence that He has proved Himself trustworthy, and in time

The prayer-life the key to the realization of sonship.

he will know the reality in his own personal experience. In this instance, as in other parts of our study, there are various considerations which we should harmonize in our thought about prayer, with all that Christ teaches.

God has taught us in all nature that His thought reaches to the minutest of His creatures. The revelations of the microscope are as wonderful as those of the telescope. There is a class of microscopic creatures called diatomaceae. They are invisible to the unaided human eye. Their forms are of exquisite beauty and every conceivable pattern. Let us couple with this fact the truth that all nature reveals a purpose in everything. That means that these microscopic creatures are the object of the direct personal attention of the Creator. One of the most striking features evident in the Creator's purpose is the provision of food for all living creatures. The same food cannot be used by all. Yet every form of vegetative and animal life has an environment with resources which furnish it food. Having no resources of self-maintenance, it is cared for, being provided the food which is exactly adapted to its need. The words of Christ are in exact accord with the teaching of science, when he said: "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Matt. 6:26.) It is the Master teach-

Science teaches that God provides for all our needs.

ing us that God is immediately concerned in us, and in making provision for all our needs.

Another fact comes to light as we study creation in nature. The tendancy in all nature is toward an increasing development of individuality. There is not a species but has some particular organ, whose distinctive use individualizes it. The whole sweep of evolution points ever to this. But this points to a development in man which shall be most distinctive of all. Considered in the light of the teaching of both science and Scripture concerning the loving Fatherhood of God, this fact, evident in all nature, becomes luminous, as we know how a father is concerned in the development of each child according to its characteristics and needs. Man's spiritual nature is to be developed. As Mr. Fiske has said, all the movement of the ages points to this. We have seen that this spiritual nature has a capacity for fellowship with God. It is a capacity like unto that which exists between an earthly father and his child. Here then we have another preliminary fact which points to the reasonableness of believing in man's personal communion with God in prayer.

The tendency to develope individuality in nature.

But some one will ask: "Suppose we grant all this, may it not be only a part of the original plan of the Creator, put into commission long ago? Why do we have any reason to believe that our prayers will make any difference with the way that God

works out His plans in our lives?" For our answer, let us consider the teaching of God in the realm of man's activity in the securing of his physical food and clothing. Here we discover a difference between man and all other creatures. All other creatures are bound by conditions of necessity, but man has a remarkable margin of liberty within which he determines much about these things. While their food is provided for other creatures, as a rule, the rule for man is that he must have a part, as a laborer together with God, in securing his necessary food. Within this margin of liberty God leaves some things to be determined by the man. By giving man this margin of liberty God in no way loses His control of His world; for it is only within a really narrow margin that He gives to man this liberty. And man most truly exercises his liberty when he does it in obedience to the laws of God, according to which man receives the fullest blessings of God. God puts life into the seed, God gives rain and sunshine, God is in it all from first to last, and nothing is done without God. But man must cultivate the soil, must sow the seed, must gather out the stones, must keep the grain free from weeds, must be diligent and faithful to his opportunities, at the same time that he puts his faith in God to bless him in his fidelity.

God has given to man a margin of liberty.

Then in the matter of clothing man is lifted far above all other creatures by this mark of his unique

relation to God. The Creator has given the resources upon which men draw for the making of the apparel needed for the preservation and comfort of the body; but the margin of liberty in this realm is even more striking than in that of food. It is as men accept the offers of God, and appropriate the possibilities at their hand, and cultivate their powers in obedience to God's laws, that all these treasures are secured. All this is our daily experience. No man can question the evident purpose of God to give to men this large margin of liberty. It is a part of the necessary exercise of that free will which is involved in the making of character. And the way in which man enters into his liberty and possesses the blessings of God will determine the degree of blessings he can receive from God. The whole teaching of the Bible in its emphasis upon man's liberty and man's responsibility is exactly to this effect. Soul culture is just like agriculture in the various conditions involving man's part. God gives spiritual life, God gives the grace needed to nourish that life, God is in it all just as He is in the life of the seed and the growth of the grain; but man must exercise his faith here, as he does in the cultivation of the soil. Man must bring forth fruits in evidence of repentance because of sin, and the result of obedience in love. It is exactly the teaching of Paul in his letter

This margin of liberty is alike in the physical and spiritual realms.

to the Philippians: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. 2: 12-13.)

There is a scholastic method which assumes to see things from God's side, and decides how God does things. But the scientific method is to begin with facts, and work along the line of these facts as far as they lead us. Moreover the scientific demand is to know how man can accomplish the most in the cultivation of the powers which he consciously possesses, rather than to satisfy his curiosity concerning mysteries about God. Men hold to the facts on lower levels, and must see that to be truly scientific we must do the same on the higher levels. We would count a man most impractical who would refuse to enter into the rich blessings which come out of his faithful cultivation of the soil because he does not understand all the mysteries connected with the unfolding experiences in his work. He has seen the result of agriculture and at once believes he will secure the same result if he shall meet the very same conditions. This is exactly what a man does, who is scientific, in the interests of his spiritual life. And he will do this, if he really desires a spiritual harvest. Too many do not really desire the spiritual growth, for they see that fruit-bearing will mean cultivation and

Man must hold to the facts about prayer, as they hold to the facts about plowing.

pruning; therefore they make the unscientific and insincere excuse for not doing their plain part that they do not understand it all. The work of a man who prays is as clear in its nature and results as the work of a man who plows. In both cases alike man's fidelity or failure will have much to do with his possession of God's blessings. God's promise is clear both in nature and in character. The facts are here to prove that as men enter into the fullness of the prayer-life, they are as surely blessed as when they enter into the farm-life. Every honest man must hold to the side of the facts, and make the most of them, waiting for light upon mysteries.

These great commanding facts about the results of prayer are to be had on every side. Such conspicuous instances in the lives of men whom many of us have seen and known personally, as George Mueller, Mr. Spurgeon and Mr. Moody, cannot be denied. These men were known as men of splendid ability, strong organizing capacity, great leadership, unusual common-sense, genuine and sincere. They had unusual influence with men which all men realized to be due to their personal testimony as to their relations to God, their heavenly Father. Their testimony alone was not the explanation of their power; but their inmost lives were known, their daily customs of prayer and communion with God. Those who knew them best, who lived in their fullest fellowship, knew that they lived a prayer-life as their most joyous ex-

Facts about the prayer-life of men

perience of fellowship with God, coming as children to a father day by day, with thanksgiving for all His blessings, and making their requests known to Him. As they grew into this fellowship, their faith increased, and their expectation became such a confidence that they rested in a quiet assurance that God would give them the blessings that would be best for them, as surely as the farmer trusts for his harvest while the seed is hid in the ground, waiting for the touch of God upon it. That God works in all this prayer-life through spiritual laws as constant and as immediate as His laws of agriculture, is perfectly evident to all these specialists in prayer; for these laws are made plain in the teachings of our Saviour upon the subject. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 6:7-8.) Thousands of competent witnesses have proved this to be true.

whom we have known.

Approaching thus by noting the teachings of science and the facts in human experience which compel us to recognize the reasonableness of believing in the realities of prayer, let us press closer to the spiritual significance of this prayer-life. There are those who admit that prayer might have a reflex blessing upon a man who sincerely aspires toward a better life. But imagine a man cultivating the soil

simply because the physical exercise is beneficial as a reflex blessing in the way of maintaining his health! There is that, but it is secondary to the great primary reality of the main business of securing a harvest. Exercise alone will not nourish the physical man. It is important, but it is just the beginning. It is just so with the spiritual man. The exercise of prayer will not suffice in itself. It is a means to a mighty end, as God pours His life and power into the open minds and hearts that are anxious to receive His blessings. It is the clear teaching of the Bible that prayer is a direct agency which affects the result in human lives, and that the result would have been different if the prayer had not been made. The book of Nehemiah is one of the most instructive in its teaching upon this subject. The prayer-life of this man of God was full of vital reality. In emergencies where the conditions were utterly beyond his control, he looked to God for guidance and help, and the prayers were answered specifically again and again, bringing victory to the man, who gave all the glory to God. No one can read the record of the prayers of Christ without realizing that He surely considered that his prayer involved a very real change in the conditions of the people who were the objects of His concern, the sick and the dead. Just so we can have no doubt that God's laws which involve the place of prayer make it as certain that prayer will effect the results

Prayer brings, not simply reflex, but direct blessings.

in our lives, making them different from what they would have been, if we had not prayed.

One striking instance may be considered here because it involves conditions which have often caused questions in many minds. The Apostle James referes to the prayer of Elijah for rain. (Jas. 5:17-18.) He is making the point that Elijah was a man just like ourselves; yet he prayed for rain and his prayer was answered. Read that simple story in 1 Kings 18:42-45. The question which many ask is with regard to the reasonableness of supposing that God would interfere with the laws of nature, and send rain in answer to prayer. Why not? We have noted in a former chapter the way in which man, in the freedom of the human will, intervenes in the workings of nature's laws again and again, in order to accomplish things worth while. We have known of men using heavy ordinance in order to hasten atmospheric conditions that would bring rain. If man has done it, with his limited freedom of power in nature, we are no longer concerned to argue that God could have done it. Our former considerations led us to the conclusion that if it were worth while, if it should advance the interests of the Kingdom of God, then it would be reasonable to believe that God did it, and would do it again. God's dealings with Israel at the time clearly vindicated his manifestation of His presence and power through Elijah. This is always the determin-

God's answer to Elijah's prayer for rain.

ing factor. The scientific thing to do is not to try to see how little of God there is in all the affairs of men, but to realize that God is in it all and immediately active in advancing the welfare of His children.

Another fact of great importance must be kept in mind as we apply the scientific method of inquiry to the place of God's laws in connection with our prayers. There are various spheres of activity in human life, each having its own conditions to success. The danger to which some are liable is that they will suppose it reasonable to expect God to reward us at certain points of life, where we have not met the conditions of blessing. In the physical realm the laws of health are plain. If a man is to expect health, he must meet the conditions involved in the laws of health. One who does this may not have money, may not have knowledge, may not have character; but he will have the physical health, because in that sphere he has obeyed the law. So another man may have wealth, for the same reason, and not have health or integrity of character. Likewise a third may have marvellous intellectual mastery, and be a physical wreck and pinched for money. Therefore when a man meets the conditions of spiritual growth, he may not possess physical, or financial, or intellectual resources, simply because he may have failed to meet the conditions of securing these. A man may have all of

Conditions of blessing in the different spheres of activity.

them to some extent, but only as the conditions are met which secure them. But some have thought that if they obey God's spiritual laws, God ought to give them blessings in other spheres, notwithstanding the fact that they do not meet the conditions there. One might as well argue that because a man has met the conditions of financial prosperity, he should therefore secure the salvation of his soul, as to argue that God should reward us for fidelity in spiritual things with dollars of gold. It is true that we are taught that when we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, God will add all the material blessings that we need. But it is to be as we need, not as we want. At the same time we are clearly taught that neglect of any law of God in any sphere must result in our failure of blessing in that sphere. A man who inquired for a good shoe-maker was told of one near by, with the statement, "He is a good Christian." He replied that he was not asking for a good Christian, but for a good shoemaker. They do not always mean the same thing. We must keep these most important facts clearly in mind as we expect the blessings of God upon us.

The foregoing considerations teach us that intelligent prayer must appreciate the relative values of things in our lives. Too many serve God in the hope that God will reward them with material prosperity. That is to say, they have utterly inadequate ideas about true spiritual wealth, "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." When Paul wrote

of this he was a beggar in a prison in Rome, receiving alms from his Christian friends, the Philippians. Fruit-bearing trees are pruned that they may bring forth more fruit. The Christian who studies Paul's life will learn how he suffered for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. But Paul had a vision of Christ as his atoning Saviour, and leaped to bear his cross as a follower of Christ. Out of his trials and privations and sufferings he wrote that "all things work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. 8:28.) Paul was growing into such deep spiritual blessings through his dicipline that he did not dare to plead for better physical conditions. Wealth is not a real blessing except as we use it for the glory of God, and even health is not a proper object of prayer except as we long to use our strength in the service of our Father in heaven. John saw into the heart of all real blessings, as he wrote to Gaius: "I wish that thou mayest prosper and be in health, as thy soul prospereth." (3 John 2v.) Only as it all resulted in spiritual prosperity was it a blessed gift from God.

All of God's blessings are intended to result in spiritual growth.

We have noted heretofore that the disciples of Christ felt that His prayer-life held the secret of His power. Therefore they asked Him to teach them to pray, which He did, giving them the fundamental elements necessary to all true prayer, and supplementing these with other teachings, as He prayed

with them and for them. The teaching in Matt. 6: 9-13, briefly analyzed, presents to us the following truth. The first words bring us again to the great thought of sonship. It was Christ who taught men to say "Our Father" to God in prayer. He is both Christ's Father and ours, as we come into the sonship with Christ. Therefore we are to come to Him and pray as naturally as a child talks to his earthly father. Our Father hears us, just as an earthly father hears, but with far greater love and far greater concern for our welfare. All that we have heretofore said about the majesty of God and the holiness of His nature gives meaning to the need that we should approach His throne of grace with reverent hearts, praying "Hallowed be Thy name." Our prayer for the coming of His Kingdom in the earth will be realized by just so much as men learn to do His will, even as it is in heaven, where His name is hallowed, where the vision of the glory of His purity points to His abhorrence of sin, where the vision of the glory of His love points to the need of our conquest of self, even as Christ made that love manifest to us, in self-sacrifice and obedience to the Father's will. Thus we come into the fellowship of Christ in sonship, saying "Our Father" to God.

A brief analysis of the Lord's Prayer.

Our Lord then teaches us four great facts about our Father. He is the great Giver, He is the great Forgiver, He is the great Leader, and He is the great Deliverer. As we let this truth grow into its

fullness in our lives, we discover how utterly dependent we are upon God. We are nothing of ourselves apart from Him. In coming to God as the great Giver, we are to look to Him for "every good gift," both spiritual and material. Daily bread for body and soul we receive from Him, both by diligence and obedience on our part in accord with His laws. God is the Source of all our resources. Nothing that will prove a blessing to us is too small a thing to bring to Him, and nothing can be too big for Him to give us, if the gift will enable us the better to glorify Him in our spiritual growth and Christian service. We have considered God as the great Forgiver in our study of the atonement. The vital fact to be emphasized here is that God's forgiveness cannot be realized in any heart that is unforgiving in its spirit. The fact is self-evident, for the unforgiving heart is unable to receive the blessing. These facts prove the need of God as the great Leader. When we go in the ways of our own choosing, we go astray. Our prayer must be that God will lead us, and then we shall never find temptations overcoming us, for God is also the great Deliverer. Whatever of evil may befall us in the testings, the trials, the temptations, the sorrows of life, He will bring His children through all of them victoriously, if we but make Him our trusted Leader. That is the vital essential. In the appreciation of our utter insufficiency, as we thus put our

God the great Giver, the great Forgiver, the great Leader, and the great Deliverer.

entire life into the hands of our Father, all is well. The blessings of sonship are multiplied in our lives.

This necessity is so vital that the Master emphasizes it fully in other places. One of the most important is the passage found in John 15 : 1-16, where we are taught that the essential condition to a victorious prayer-life is an abiding in Christ, as the branch abides in the vine. In this union with Christ, we must be keenly alive to the fact that He is our Advocate at the Father's throne, ever living to make intercession for us. To be in true sympathy with Christ, we are not simply to think of the historic Christ incarnate centuries ago, in union with us by His Spirit; but we are to see that Christ's life now is a continuous prayer-life in His great work of mediation. This great fact illuminates the place of intercessory prayer in the lives of all true followers of the Intercessor. All heaven is bending down in a great yearning for the souls of men. We have noted that the Christian is a trustee of the Gospel to give it to others. This stewardship must be emphasized more and more. With it goes the prayer of intercession. When the man in the Gospels (Luke 11 : 5-13), went to his neighbor to ask for three loaves, he had a stronger plea because he was asking, not for himself, but for a friend. Even so there is a power with God in prayers of intercession which is not possible in prayers for ourselves. For it is where the element of self is most completely

Abiding in Christ the primary condition of power in prayer.

eliminated that God can most honor our faith and use us to His glory.

All this truth illuminates the fact presented in a previous chapter, namely that we are recipients rather than agents in our Christian lives. Our opportunity and our responsibility are both found in this fact. What we do as agents is done still more as recipients, for it is only as we receive power from God that we are able to do anything in His service. The branch grows its fruit as a recipient of life from the vine. Just so the Christian develops a Christ-like character in view of his having received the power to do so from Christ Himself. This is the great secret of the prayer-life, that is to say, of the true Christian life. Only to the man who is poor in spirit, a spiritual beggar before God, can the Kingdom come in power. To be conscious of continuous dependance upon God, to be utterly emptied of self, and to live in unceasing expectation from Him, these are the essential features of the right attitude in prayer. Then, and only then, is God's strength made perfect in our weakness. Then will His power work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. The obedience of faith which ever draws closer to God along this pathway, will receive greater blessings than man can contain, until the overflow of our lives will reveal to others that God is filling us with His own life and power.

The Christian always a recipient more than an agent.

The climax of the truth is reached as we see that all thus far said leads us up to the place where Christ makes clear the distinctive part which the Holy Spirit must have in the prayer-life. We have noted in a previous chapter that as the Father reveals His truth in the Son, the power of the Spirit is made manifest to men. All power comes with the coming of the Spirit of God. In the 14th and 16th chapters of John, our Lord teaches us the truth about the coming and the work of the Spirit. In the 11th chapter of Luke He teaches us to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and tells us that God is more ready to give us this gift than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. As He left His disciples, He instructed them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should receive power, after that the Holy Spirit had come upon them. (Acts 1:4-8.) There is a work of the Spirit in the life of every Christian when his faith is quickened to accept Christ as his Saviour; but there is another gift of the Spirit in a more distinct way, as a baptism for service. This gift of the Spirit is necessary to the power of which we have been speaking. And the distinctive need is evident when we learn from Paul, (Rom. 8:26-27) that we do not know how to pray as we ought, and the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, and He

The supreme place of the Holy Spirit in the prayer life.

that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." This luminous fact throws light on that other striking expression of Paul, as he speaks, (Phil. 1:19) to the Philippians of the helpfulness of their prayer, "and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." It is as if a great reservoir is available for us, and in so far as we have the channels of communication open and free, there will flow down an endless and all-sufficient supply from our God.

In order to keep these channels open and free, there is another duty which the Master has urged upon us with great intensity. It is the duty of cultivating a faith so great that God can do mighty things for us. This is in exact accord with the fact that we are evermore recipients. Let us see this truth in the light of the following illustration. There is a point a thousand miles or more, out in space, where there is no atmosphere. Scientists tell us that beyond that point the sunbeams pour down through the ether dark and cold. It is because of the atmosphere about the earth that the sun's rays, through refraction and radiation, bring us the blessings of light and heat. Just so faith is the atmosphere of spiritual power which is essential to our receiving that power in any measure. It is ever according to our faith that we receive. In certain places Christ could do none of His mighty works because of their unbelief. (Matt. 13:58.)

Our faith is always necessary

before God's gift can be bestowed.

It was always great faith which brought the gift of power. The great need in our prayer is not to give information to God about ourselves, but to open to His hand a heart so full of faith that He can supply our every need. It was Tennyson who said that Jesus Christ was to his soul what the sun was to the flower, and in that statement he suggests the right attitude of the soul toward Christ, as that of the flower open to the sun. Again and again the burden of Christ's utterance to men who needed His help was in the inspiring and also pleading statement "Only believe!" Read the 11th chapter of John to see how that fact throbs through the whole experience out of which Lazarus was raised from the dead. To the doubting Martha, whose faith had been quickened and strengthened by the Master, He said, as if fearful that the necessary atmosphere might fail Him after all: "Said I not unto thee that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

This great fact needs, however, to be guarded from unscriptural and extreme application. In our time there is an emphasis upon the teaching that the prayer of faith will heal the sick, which is not properly guarded by the whole teaching of the New Testament about prayer. The advocates of this extreme view insist that if there be sufficient faith in prayer, there is no disease which may not be healed, for God has made known His will in this regard. This assumes that there is no longer need, when praying

for divine healing, to say "nevertheless, not my will, but Thine." Moreover it is urged that no medical aid should be admitted, since full trust in God is all that is necessary for full recovery of health. It will be sufficient to refer to the experience of the Apostle Paul, of which he tells us in 2 Cor. 12:7-9. Paul was suffering with some affliction of the flesh, and prayed the Lord thrice to take it away. But God said no to Paul, promising to him grace sufficient to bear it. No one can doubt that Paul, with the affliction and the added grace, was a stronger man, with a richer spiritual experience, than if his prayer had been answered, relieving him of the affliction and withholding the added grace. Therefore he declared that he gloried in his infirmities. As to the use of means, we know that Isaiah used a poultice of figs in the healing of Hezekiah, (Is. 38:21) and that Christ used clay upon the eyes of one restored to sight. The teaching is clear that the Bible sanctions the use of God-given potencies of healing, seeking His blessing upon all such means used. But in all this, and beyond it all, we are to trust the power of God, when we pray for the healing of the sick, and especially when man has done his utmost, and the life rests, beyond the power of human skill, in the hands of the giver of life and the healer of disease.

The place of faith in the prayer for the sick.

The logic of this teaching becomes even more clear as we note the plain words of Christ about the fact

that God does not always give us the particular answer which we seek, for to grant the particular request would not be best for us; but God always gives us, when we pray in the right attitude toward Him, the blessing which will be best for us. All true prayer recognizes this loving wisdom in God. We are taught (James 4:3) that we "ask, and receive not, because we ask amiss; and Christ tells us, (Luke 11:-11-13) that sometimes when we think we ask for bread, God sees that it is really a stone, and He does not give it to us. When Garfield lay dying, the whole Christian part of the nation united in prayer to God for his recovery. There was a feeling of keen conviction that his life was needed just at that time in the affairs of the nation. But it was his death which led to the healing of the differences between factions, and drew the nations of the earth to us in sympathy and good will. The real prayer in the hearts of the people was answered by his death, as it doubtless could not have been by his life. God knew best, and gave the answer in His own way. Instances of this sort could be multiplied in great numbers. The children of Our Father have discovered that if their particular petition at the time had been granted, it would not have been so well with them as it proved ultimately to be through the love of God that gave the real blessing by denying the particular request.

God gives the true blessing though not always granting the particular request.

There is one more law which Christ has empha-

sized and which must be urged upon our earnest thought. It is the law that when two or three are brought together in united prayer, there is consequently added power secured from God in answer to their prayer. This vitally important teaching is found in Matt. 18. 19-20, where it is asserted that if two shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of our Father in heaven. Then Christ continues "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." It is most instructive to note that the Greek verb here translated "agree" is the word "symphonize." This bringing of two lives into full accord with Christ, who is the bond of harmony, and to whose life they are thus attuned, is asserted to be a condition of added power in prayer. Every one who has had experience in leading others into the blessings of the prayer-life will instantly appreciate the fact thus stated. It is as two believers who feel the need of the help of God, talk together about the reality of their experiences in prayer, about the facts which justify their full faith in God, about the deeper experience of one which the other longs to possess; it is as all this is done that an agreement tends immediately to deepen the faith of both, and bring both to God in a prayer of faith stronger than was possible before. It is this, beyond doubt, which we are taught was the secret of that marvelous agreement in prayer through

Special blessings promised to united prayer.

the days which culminated in Pentecost. "They were all with one accord in one place," (Acts 2 : 1) and out of that agreement in prayer there went up to God such a faith as no company of human souls had ever known before. Therefore the mighty power of God was poured out upon them. Still other Pentecosts will come as the like conditions are met by true believers.

Let the reader review the marginal index of the chapter, and survey the movement of the thought again. There is a growing conviction in the minds of many that the day is approaching when an increasing number of the followers of Christ will come into such a prayer-life as they had not imagined possible. Thousands are just standing within the doorway of the great treasure house, but have never appreciated nor appropriated the wonderful treasures that there await them. It is this prayer-life which has in it such boundless possibilities for the people of God and for the Church of Christ. Here and there in a few isolated cases God has revealed His readiness to bestow such blessings upon us as we have not yet known. He longs for nothing more than that we shall meet the conditions of prevailing prayer. Evermore He sends down this challenge to His people: "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there

God waiting to reveal His power to a praying people.

shall not be room enough to receive it." When the prayer-life of the people of God comes to be the dominant feature of Christian experience, the power of God will sweep the earth with the victories of grace.

THE
SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN CHRISTIANITY.

IX.

THE SCIENTIFIC BELIEF IN CHRISTIANITY.

It is not intended to argue in this chapter that Christianity is the only true religion. The facts heretofore considered leave no doubt as to that. Yet the scientific belief in Christianity involves not only an examination into its source in Jesus Christ, not only its character in view of the claims it makes to be the only religion which adequately meets the world's needs; but also an examination into its actual history in order to discover how far it has realized its mission in the world, and what has been its real power in human history. How far has Christianity proved its right to its claim by showing its power to bring greater blessings to men than any other religion has brought? How far has it vindicated its claim to superiority by its persistence as a missionary force among men and nations? Has it held its own wherever it has been planted? Has it realized the sonship of God among men with increasing fidelity? Has it accomplished in nineteen centuries what we have a right to expect it to have accomplished in that time? These are the questions which give us,

Questions which Christianity must answer.

even as Christians, occasion to pause. To many of them we are compelled to answer with sorrow, and confess that the centuries of Christian history have revealed no such victories for Christianity as a reader of the New Testament would be justified in expecting. What then? Are there facts to be presented which compel the conviction that Christianity is the only true religion, notwithstanding the failures of Christians to realize its purest life and its victorious spread over the earth? Yes, we believe there are such facts. It is to these that we are to give attention in this chapter.

In our study of the Bible, and the people of Bible times, we saw clearly the fact that man's education into the light of spiritual truth has been very slow. All through the Old Testament that progress continued, if slow, yet steadily onward, until one like the aged Simeon was ready for the coming of the Saviour. But there were few like him. Most men were slow to accept Jesus Christ and His high ideals of life, of which they had never dreamed before. Yet there were some who believed in Him, and who saw a vision of God, who caught something of the meaning of the kingdom of heaven, as it is to be unfolded in the human heart. It was a "little flock" who thus began to follow the Shepherd. At times they were greatly discouraged because so few joined their number; but the Master saw into the future years, and, with sublime assurance en-

The progress of Christianity has been very slow.

couraged them to believe that no doubt could exist as to the ultimate triumph of His kingdom in the earth. (Luke 12:32.) Christ knew the material with which He had to deal. He told them of the long struggle before the consummation. He knew the years would drag out wearily before the end should come, when the Gospel should be preached to all nations. (Matt. 24:4-14.) But that day would come.

Now the reason for believing in Christianity is that the study of the New Testament makes it clear that the difficulty has been, not with the teaching of Christ, but with the unreadiness of men to receive and obey it. All the way He shines out in the glory of His life and truth. Christ alone continues to give us the only solution of the problem of character, and to reveal to us the sonship of God which is the goal for human lives. Nothing has ever dimned His glory. Nay that glory has steadily increased through the years, even though His followers have fallen so far short of fidelity as His witnesses among men. Therefore He is still the only hope of the race, and therefore the religious system which still gives Him to men must be our most important object of faith and devotion. If it should be urged that God might, or ought to have proved His power to win men, in spite of human unreadiness to accept His love, we must at once see that such a position is untenable, since the whole problem of human character

Yet Christ and His religion the only hope of the race.

is the problem of dealing with free moral agents, who cannot be forced to serve, but must be won by love. It is vital that we face this fact honestly just here. The place to study it is in our own hearts. The man who knows the truth, but does not live it, is reproducing the history of the race. Were we to urge that God should *compel* us to be unselfish, to be full of faith, to be repentant because of sin, to be in sympathy with Christ, to live a genuine prayer-life, to be consecrated to the highest standard, to hold fast to every element of strength we ever possessed; we would be just as unreasonable as to suggest that God should do this in any other life. No, we know in our own hearts that the difficulty is with ourselves. God has done His part, and offers to us all that we need to have the victory. As we are true or unfaithful, the progress of the Kingdom is hastened or delayed.

This is exactly the philosophy of Christian history. It has ever been the same sort of human nature as our own, with which God has had to deal. It has been a sad picture of human frailty. But it has also been a wondrous picture of God's patience. All nature teaches us that it takes time to accomplish the making of anything that is to abide. Manifestly the making of character requires more time than anything else. Man must be won by love and truth. Only thus can the victory abide. From the beginning until now Christ has stood at the doors of

It takes time to make anything that will abide.

human hearts seeking to come in and secure an abiding fellowship with men. Some have let Him in, but only a little way. Some have given Him a whole life, a complete possession of the throne of the soul, as Lord and King. According as His witnesses have been true, the progress of the Kingdom has been advanced, now slowly, now more rapidly. But just as the truth won its way through the early ages, it has kept its advance. Our Lord taught that it is a slow growth, even as when a man puts a seed into the ground, which comes up first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn. (Mark 4: 26-29.) As the recurring seasons of growth in nature have ever been interleaved with seasons of delay and death, so has it been in the spiritual realm. But the seed has continued to grow, and with each passing century has unfolded its promise of increasing power, until today the promise of the harvest is greater than ever before.

We may say, from this point of view, that Christianity is a growth into the knowledge of Christ. First, an increasing appreciation of Christ Himself as being the revelation of God, with a clearer vision of the Fatherhood of God and the divine love than our fathers had through many of the Christian centuries. Second, an increasing appreciation of the purpose of Christ concerning the work which His followers are to accomplish in the earth. This conception has steadily enlarged, with expansive and intensive growth, until today we have a conception of the place and work of the Christian religion which

no century has had since the beginning. It is a part of the task of scientific inquiry to note the character of this slow progress into the place of intelligent appreciation of the purpose of Christ, as clearly taught us in the Gospels. We have noted that the realization of sonship involves three things: something done for us, something done in us, and something done by us. It is in this study of the work to be done by the followers of Christ that we have to note how the not unexpected has come to pass; for all human history has pointed to a slow progress here. It is a great battle of the forces of righteousness against the forces of sin, and the foe is only being overcome against most stubborn resistance, being intrenched behind the centuries of inertia in sin, and yielding by slight degrees to the steady attack of the truth in love. The "marching orders" of our great Captain have never been changed from the beginning. His vision of the end from the beginning has ever been clear, and some of His followers are just coming to see that vision with joy.

Christianity a growth into the knowledge of Christ.

Christ's conception was of a world-wide spread of His Kingdom. He laid upon His followers the duty to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. (Acts 1: 8.) His "great commission" is to "go, teach all nations." (Matt. 28: 18-20.) We have noted that His teachings are not provincial, but universal in their character. But

His people stumbled much in the way toward the development of the Christian ideal. The value of noting those failures will be in the help thus secured to guard the Christian of our time from giving place in his own life to those mistaken ideas which the years have proved inadequate and ineffectual. The simplicity and purity of the early type of Christian living were not easily maintained. Judaism had much of ceremonial in it which continued to seek a place in Christian worship. Paganism had much of the unspiritual conception of religion, and the early Church was not long in feeling the subtle influence of these things. Out of both Judaism and paganism came the idea of asceticism as the mark of the true religionist. The movement toward this hermit-life swept round the Mediterranean, and at one time there were forty thousand hermits in the Thebaid of Egypt alone. But Christ had prayed to the Father: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." (John 17:15.) In time men came to say: "This is not what it means to be a Christian." But the lesson has never been fully learned. This mode of self-exile from the busy, needy world is still supposed by some to have in it the secret of power in the victory over sin. But you cannot win a battle by running away from the foe. This victory is to be won in the thick of the world's life.

Christianity is not asceticism.

Then came the baptism of the Roman Empire into the Christian Church, and with it came the thought of utilizing civil power as a means of advancing the cause of righteousness. But Christ had said: "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18: 36.) Yet to this day some men would fain identify Church and state in one system of control. The rise of Mohammedanism intensified this thought with a positive emphasis upon the idea of religious conquest by the sword. Out of it all came the Crusades with their spirit of vengeance, and the hatred of the foes of the faith. That was a day of sad travesty upon the teaching of Jesus Christ when Saladin sent an ambassy to Richard the Lion-hearted begging for the lives of Mohammedan captives and offering to ransom them in gold. For answer Richard's army led out twenty thousand of those captives, men, women and children, and butchered them in sight of the foe, sending back the message: "Thus does a Christian deal with an infidel!" And often has this method of force, in persecution and inquisition, shameful in its non-Christian character, been adopted by the Church which took the name of Christ. But men came inevitably to say: "This is not what it means to be a Christian." Alas, that we have not yet learned this lesson fully! Some would still attempt to advance the cause of truth by constraining and restraining men by legislative enactment. And still many who take the name of Christ

Christianity is not a conquest by the sword.

would attempt to justify war as righteous for Christian nations, as being a factor in advancing civilization! All this is unworthy of the followers of the Prince of Peace.

The Dark Ages were the inevitable result of such conceptions of religion, and they saw a system of artificial dealing with sin in the Church utterly subversive of true character-building in the lives of the children of God. In spite of the darkness and degradation of it all, there were some who persisted as true witnesses of Jesus Christ. From the beginning the word "martyr," which simply means "witness," came to involve that sort of heroic fidelity to the truth which cost the life of those who were faithful. Through the influence of such the Reformation came, and with it the renaissance of truth, not only in religion, but in all life. Slowly it has grown into leaf and flower and fruit; but steadily it has brought the truth of the New Testament in its purity and simplicity to be seen and understood of men. Even in our time there is so much of our civilization which is utterly unworthy, and too much complacent compromise with it all on the part of the Christian Church. Who doubts that in the future years Christians will look back upon our day, upon our playing at the business of witnessing for Jesus Christ, and say: "How could they imagine that was the true Christianity?" Much, very much, remains to be accomplished before Christ's ideal is

A new day dawned with the Reformation.

realized by His followers, and therefore by the great world which waits for Him.

The great fact which marks the breaking of the new day out of the night of the middle ages is the fact of the emphasis given to the value of the individual man as man. In the years before the masses of men were dealt with in herds, most of them being slaves. But the new teaching was vigorous in its insistance that every man may enter alike into the sonship of God. It was all in that teaching of Christ when He taught men to say "Our Father." None then realized how those potent words carried in them the death knell of the divine right of earthly kings, and gave to every man a vision of an equality in spiritual worth in the sight of God and men. Over the Christian world this new emphasis upon the old and neglected truth spread with increasing power. There were ebbs and flows, reformations and counter-reformations, but the truth continued to spread. The constraining love of Christ throbbed anew in the hearts of men, and the responsibility of the followers of Christ for the faithful discharge of their stewardship brought its compelling sense of duty until they heard the call of God, "Who will go?" and began to answer: "Here I am, send me." The Church of Jesus Christ was at last awaking to its mission. Through centuries it had been blind to its great trust; but at last it came to be true that men said to know Christ for their own

A new appreciation of the value of man as man.

Saviour meant that they must know Christ as demanding that they should give the knowledge of Him to those who knew Him not.

A vital point to be noted is the difference between the fundamental emphasis of Protestantism and that of the Church which thus lapsed so pitifully through the centuries of spiritual darkness. Nothing is more significant than the fact that Protestantism teaches that God deals with men, not from the point of view of their sins, but from that of their sin. This difference between sin and sins marks the whole movement of the Christian development of the Church of the Reformation. Sin is a principle in the human heart, not an aggregation of transgressions or neglects. The soul who comes into intelligent relations with God, through the atoning love of Christ, in whom we are reconciled to the Father, is not pardoned piece-meal, for some of his sins, while others remain unforgiven. Such a conception of the realization of sonship, of entering into the adoption whereby we cry "Abba, Father!" is utterly false to the experience of the human heart, in the relations of father and son, and totally contrary to the clear teaching of the New Testament. It will suffice to set the contrast clearly before the reader's mind. Character-building must have a bed-rock on which to erect an abiding structure. That foundation is a full forgiveness through Jesus Christ, with a promise of sufficient grace to overcome sin, according as the

The distinctive emphasis of Protestantism about sin.

recipient is faithful to receive the offered power.

A further fundamental difference is in the emphasis of Protestantism upon the liberty of direct and immediate access to God our loving Father, as children in fellowship with Him, whereas the older Church had developed a system of mediation through priests and saints. Notwithstanding the plain teaching in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, this system of priestly intercession has been developed until the conception of full and free access to God is not enjoyed by thousands of the adherents of the Christian faith, thus suffering alloy.

Direct access to God secured to us through Christ.

The vigorous spirit of independence in the struggles for civil and religious liberty in modern history has been nothing less than the history of Protestantism. These men know only one spiritual Father, the living God, and only one great High Priest, Jesus Christ the Saviour. In Him they come into the sonship with God, and grow into the conscious blessings of a prayer-life in which the sweetness of salvation is in the promise of full forgiveness, without the torturing thought of some sins still unforgiven, and in the immediate reception from God of evident answers to prayer, and tokens of His great love.

It is out of this conception of the Fatherhood of God that we have come to that conception of the brotherhood of men which is giving character to all

our modern development of human relationships. Christ's teachings are responsible for this, and many Christians realize that all the agitation and revolution which mark the struggles of men toward liberty, as they see it, are but the breaking of the old stagnation and apathy of lazy centuries now past forever. But today the waking Church stands somewhat dazed by its discovery. It faces a gigantic task with hesitant faith on the part of many who call themselves the followers of Christ. It is not for us to reproach our fathers, but to see that our children are not given reason to reproach us. For us the battle is on. For us the tremendous purpose of Christ to win a world from sin is now clear, and His command undeniable. We see what it means today, as our fathers could not, for we have sent out the advance guards, and back from the firing line they are bringing us accurate information regarding the nature of the task. We behold the essential unity of the whole human race. We see the sufficiency of the Gospel of Christ to save every man who lives on the globe. And we see our duty clear to give that Gospel to the whole world.

The new appreciation of the brotherhood of men.

When we turn from our own land, where Christianity is best established, to study the nations of the world which are not Christian, we have cause for rejoicing because of what has been begun for their redemption. But it is the merest beginning. Mil-

lions of men, women and children have not heard of Christ, and are dying in the darkness of ignorance and despair. In every non-Christian land they wait for the light which we are able to give them. Let any Christian man try to conceive what his life would be, if Christ were taken out of it! But just that is the state of these millions who have him not. Robert Speer quotes the following statement from an address at Madras by Swami Vivekenanda: "The most hideous ceremonies, the most horrible and most obscene books that human hands ever wrote, or human brain ever conceived, the most bestial forms that ever passed under the name of religion, have all been the creation of degraded Buddhism." Rudyard Kipling, anxious to give a sympathetic statement about India, is compelled to say: "You can't gather figs from thistles; and so long as the system of infant marriage, the prohibition of the remarriage of widows, the life-long imprisonment of wives in a worse than penal imprisonment, and the withholding from them of any kind of education, (Only two per cent of women in India can read,) or treatment as rational beings continues, the country cannot advance a step. Half of it is morally dead, and worse than dead, and that is just the half from which we have a right to look for the best impulses. It is right here where the trouble is, and not in any political considerations whatsoever. The foundations of their life are rotten—utterly, bestially rotten. The men

Conditions in non-christian lands.

talk of their rights and privileges. I have seen the women that bore these very men; and again—may God forgive the men."

It is when we face conditions like these in foreign lands that we begin to realize what Christianity must see its mission to be. There was a time when the Church stood for little more than public worship. But today its conception has broadened until it recognizes that nothing short of an influence, vitalizing and redemptive, reaching to every part of human life, to every interest of the home, the city and the state, will achieve that which is evidently in the mind of Christ for the saving of the world. The intelligent Christian now sees that the religion of Christ must be the dominant power in the progress of humanity toward the sonship of God. Moreover he does not need to go to non-Christian lands to realize this. In the densely populated sections of our great cities the need is at his very door. The scientific belief in Christianity is justified by nothing more than by the way it is beginning to grapple with this gigantic task at home and abroad. The Christian Church now knows it would be unworthy of its Lord except as it includes in its purpose the development of the spirit of Jesus Christ in the whole moral, social and political life of the people. This means work for the uplifting of the whole man. But it will never mean the ignoring of the spiritual man, in the false hope

Christianity must seek to redeem every part of human life.

of redeeming human life by external applications of whatever sort. The difficulty with mankind is sin. Only as we deal with human sin shall we solve the problem of sanitation, of taxation and all the other problems of civilization. All these things are the fruit of the redemption from sin through Christ. That is the root. That is the fountain. Make that sweet and the waters of the stream will cleanse and satisfy the thirsty soul.

Still more do we appreciate the stupendous task when we pause to consider that America is not more than one-fourth Christian. In easy phrase we call ourselves a Christian nation; but the true Christian nation is far from being realized in our midst. The fact that we have made progress is not forgotten, when we honestly face all the dark lines in the picture. In a century the Church membership has increased from one in thirteen in the population to one in four. But that still means one-fourth. When you count the sympathetic adherents of the Church, they will not more than off-set the merely nominal membership on printed rolls. With vice rampant and impudent, with wealth luxurious and selfish, with war between nations and strife between classes, with race prejudices deep and hateful, with Mormonism eating like a cancer at the nation's heart, with national, state and city governments dependant for revenue upon a traffic that is blighting thousands of homes and wrecking thou-

America not more than one-fourth Christian.

sands of characters, with the Church itself all too complacent and indifferent in the midst of such conditions as these, we may well realize that America is not more than one-fourth Christian. Our fair heritage is not yet redeemed, and there is no magic charm about the word American. The only word which guarantees the future is that of Jesus Christ written upon human hearts and shining in Christian service for dying men. Our task is just begun.

The scientific inquiry in view of these facts must be—What is Christianity now seeking to do to meet this need? And how is the work resulting in our time? Primarily it is seeking to give the knowledge of the personal Christ, as the atoning Saviour, to all men. Incidentally, and in all sorts of ways, it is seeking to develop the fullness of the Christian life into which Christ has been welcomed. Sometimes it is recognized that philanthropy is a stepping stone to the point of vantage from which to preach Christ, but philanthropy in itself would not suffice; for without the living Christ all else will prove insufficient to solve the problem of the human soul. Among the famine stricken the Christian goes to feed the hungry with bread, but never forgetting their need of the living Bread for the starving soul. Into crowded tenements Christian agencies go to open clearings for city parks, and more light in modern apartments; but in the hope that thus they can secure a hearing as they speak of the "life which

Christ first, to be followed by everything Christian.

is the light of men." Christian schools in both Christian and non-Christian lands teach boys and girls the fundamentals of education, teach them trades and professions, teach them by object-lesson and precept how to make a Christian home; but all these are but features which accompany the fundamental purpose to teach them Christ. Christian physicians and nurses visit the sick, establish hospitals and clinics, where they heal the bodies and care for the dying; but always to give to the sin-sick souls the knowledge of the divine Physician who heals from the leprosy of sin, and abolishes death for the believers. These are not the tasks of dreamers, but the services of self-sacrificing followers of Him who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

All this work, as we have said is just in its beginnings, evident as we realize the needs yet to be met, and remember how slowly the progress of the race has developed through the centuries. Therefore as we note the results of these beginnings, we are to find the promise of the ultimate, victorious consummation. In America the most scientific test to be made of Christian progress is in noting that the standard of character is higher than it was ever known to be in the past. Two hundred years ago most of the colleges and churches were begun with lotteries. One hundred years ago prominent leaders in the Christian Church were dealers in intoxicating liquor. Mr. Gladstone told us that when he was a boy all

gentlemen used profanity. Fifty years ago to buy and sell ones's fellow-men as slaves in no way effected a man's standing as a Christian gentleman. Within recent years Parnell was defeated for parliament and Breckenridge for congress because, for the first time, the people demanded that a man's private life should not be known to be impure, if he hoped to obtain public office. "Reform" is a word which now commands the best thought and the truest allegiance of the best people. Nor is this encouraging progress to be noted only in Christian lands. Gen. J. W. Phelps wrote of Madagascar: "During the present century, and chiefly through missionary agency, Madagascar has passed from a state of pagan barbarism to one of Christian civilization, in which it has entered and taken a stand among the Christian nations of the world." Of the work of Christians in the Malay Archipelago, A. R. Wallace has written: "They have assisted the Government in changing a savage into a civilized community in a wonderfully short space of time." Karl Ritter declared the transformation of the cannibals of New Zealand through the influence of Christianity to be "the standing miracle of the age." In a former chapter we quoted the testimony of Darwin as to the marvellous changes wrought by Christianity in Terra del Fuego. The Administration reports for British Burmah, for 1881, state that "Christianity contin-

Some proof of the uplifting power of Christianity.

ues to spread among the Karens, to the great advantage of the Commonwealth, and the Christian communities are more industrious, better educated, and more law-abiding than the villages around them."

Now it must be remembered that these latter statements are made of sections where non-Christian religions were dominant. Lord Salisbury said the nations of the earth must be divided into two parts, the living nations and the dying nations, and that the living nations are those where Christianity is the dominant religion. Prof. George Wm. Knox, one of the most careful students of comparative religions has recently said: "It is an historic fact that not Hinduism, nor Buddhism, nor Confucianism, nor Islam, but Christianity is the source of the efforts for freedom, for a higher social life, for the elevation of humanity, which are transforming the world." What candid student of history can deny this statement? The *Jiji Shimpo,* one of the leading newspapers of Japan, has this to say of Christianity: "The Japanese cannot thank the Christian missionary too much for the admirable leaven that he introduced into their relations with foreigners, nor can they do better than follow the example that he has set in their intercourse with the Koreans." In 1871, the Regent of Siam frankly told Mr. Seward, the United States Consul-General at

Christianity vitalizes peoples of dying nations.

Shanghai, "Siam has not been disciplined by English and French guns, as China has, but the country has been opened by Christians." Sir Bartle Frere, formerly Governor of Bombay, earnestly asserted: "Whatever you may be told to the contrary, the teaching of Christianity among 160,000,000 of civilized, industrious Hindus and Mohammedans in India is effecting changes, moral, social and political, which for extent and rapidity of effect are far more extraordinary than anything that you or your fathers have witnessed in modern Europe."

By such proofs of its power all round the globe, Christianity has vindicated its claim to be the only true and adequate religion for mankind. By its increasing clearness of vision of Christ, by its condemnation of its own failures, by its facing of the world's needs with the undaunted purpose to meet them, by its absolute confidence that the Gospel of Christ is all-sufficient in its power to transform the whole human race, by its challenge to all men who are the followers of Christ to rise to a higher level of consecration to His service, by its increasing growth into a higher type of Christian living,—by all these things it demands the recognition of every scientific student of religious life and teaching, as being the growing embodiment of the spirit of Christ Himself, as the only Saviour of the world, who counted it certain that one day the

The claim of Christianity made good by its fruits.

world should be saved through His redeeming truth and redeeming love. Its spirit is more and more inclusive, rather than exclusive, as it touches that in other faiths which may be preparatory to its fulness of truth. Its method is conciliatory, rather than condemnatory, as Christians realize that they are just a little further along in the making of a Christ character than those with whom they deal. Its effort is for a realization of the brotherhood of men, by bringing all men into the only true brotherhood, namely that in which all come into the sonship of God through Jesus Christ.

But what then is the scientific demand upon all men who believe in righteousness and in the duty to advance it in all the earth? That demand is first upon the Christian who has identified himself with the organized movement of Christianity, the Christian Church. The facts mentioned in this chapter point most clearly the way for all such to walk. There is a manifest need of such a radical change in the general life of the Church as will strip it of its complacency and selfishness. There must come into the life of all who call themselves Christians such an era of self-denial as we have not yet begun to cultivate. Until that era comes, until we hear our blessed Christ saying: "I am thirsty, and ye give me no drink. I am hungry, and ye give me no meat," and leap with swift feet to carry to Him the water of life and the bread of life, realizing that inasmuch as we do it unto one of the least of His,

we do it unto Him,—until that day comes, the Church will still drag its way wearily along, and we will need to measure its progress by centuries in order to discover its true power. That power is apparent, but it should be an inspiration to us to gird ourselves for such service as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, as the Church has never yet given to him. We are to be pitied because of our selfish indifference to the needs of the millions who know not Christ and the blessings which go with that knowledge. The world's need is for a prophet, with a heart aflame with the love of Christ, with the constraining love of Christ burdening his soul because of a dying world, with a message of such power as to strike condemnation and shame to the heart of the Church of today, until those who call themselves Christians shall actually "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," and let all other things be added as God shall see best.

The claim of Christianity upon the Christian.

But the scientific demand of Christianity is also upon every man who has any faith and hope in Jesus Christ as his Saviour. There are many such who are not openly identified with the Christian cause. For various insufficient reasons they shirk the clearer claim of this great cause and of their Saviour Himself upon their open allegiance. The manifest blessings which follow organization, and the manifest necessity of organization in order to effective service in the spread of the Gospel over the world, both

justify the institution of the Church, in its communion and its activities. The day is past when the Church seeks to exalt non-essentials among its people. That day in the past was marked, in so far, by a weakness largely left behind. The great fundamentals essential to an intelligent faith in Jesus Christ are now emphasized by all Evangelical Churches, and secondary truths, more or less important, are matters of freedom in the realm of individual liberty. We have set forth in our discussions those truths which are vital to a scientific faith in Christ and in Christianity. We believe no man who desires for himself, and for his fellow-men, a character like unto that of Christ, can fail to see that he must go to Christ for his redemption from sin into the sonship of God, and that he must take his place with the followers of Christ in the effort to help every other man, whose life he may touch in any way, to know Christ as the only Saviour from sin unto God.

The claim of Christiantiy upon secret believers.

Let the reader review the marginal index of this chapter. Let him recall the emphasis of the need of an honest attitude toward the claim of the truth which was made in an earlier chapter. Let him face with just such an honest attitude the claim which Jesus Christ makes upon him to give his life, as a redeemed servant of the divine Master, to the sublime task of helping to save this world. Let him face the need of a deeper consecration in Christian

living than the Church of Christ knows generally today, with the determination to make one life count for a higher, stronger, truer Christian service, unselfish and joyous. Let him seek to have that which is to be done for us, and in us, be made manifest in that which is being done by us. Let him plan to do this at once, without waiting to see how the other man will do. Let him cultivate such a prayer-life as will develop the individual relationship with Christ, on the one hand, as will enable him and compel him to develop Christ-like relations with men, on the other hand, day by day. It is no longer a matter of doubt that Christianity will one day victoriously fill the earth. But it is a question which each one must answer as to what part he will have in retarding that glad day, or in hastening its coming.

Each one counts one to retard or hasten the redemption.

THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK AND HOPE.

X.

THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK AND HOPE.

One of the most distinctive statements in the New Testament is that in Paul's second letter to Timothy, (2 Tim. 1:10): "Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." It must be apparent to every thoughtful man that it would be a superficial interpretation of this statement which would count it as having particular, not to say exclusive reference to the continued existence of the soul beyond this earthly life. But many have thus applied it. Yet a scientific investigation into the significance of immortality must base such inquiry upon the character of the life whose continuance is considered. Unless the character of the life be worth while, its continued existence is not worth while. A prodigal aristocrat came to Talleyrand for assistance, exclaiming: "I must live, you know!" But Talleyrand quietly replied: "I do not see the necessity." In fact there are evidences to show that just because this life was not counted a blessing, men have not only not wished to continue it, but have hastened their death. Aristophanes

Christ has brought life and immortality to light.

pictures such a man for us in one of his plays. The Buddhistic doctrine of Nirvana is just this emphasis of the bliss of ceasing to have a conscious existence. The Jews divided into Pharisees and Sadducees because the latter denied the resurrection, and that was because they did not see the desirability of a continued life.

Therefore it is profoundly important to realize that in bringing life to light Christ's first work was to give men to see that life here is to be made worth while. Unless that be done, there is no promise for a life to come. Unless redeeming power can win here, in the realm of human experience, there can be no such assurance as will justify a scientific faith in a power able to make life desirable anywhere else in the future years. The logic of our thought is therefore clear. It is our outlook for life here which must be our ground for a hope for a life forever. The character of that outlook, determined by the facts, must inevitably put quality into the hope of men. Suppose Christianity were not making good its claim! Suppose men could not see the light shining in the pathway of human progress! Then no joy would be quickened in millions of souls at the thought of dragging on wearily through endless years of such existence as they know here and now. Hence it was that Christ brought life to light, and counted it His primary task to make effective

Christ's first purpose to show the value of this life.

His redemptive forces for this earth in point of time.

It is suggestive that Christ in His teaching did not dwell at great length upon the subject of the future life. He was first concerned to have the Kingdom of Heaven begin in men's hearts at once. The naturalness of its continuance would appear in the nature of things. It is the character of Christ's life which makes it easy and natural and reasonable to believe His statement that He will continue to live. All the historic material which points to the fact of His resurrection on the third day after His crucifixion is valuable and important; but it would have little effect upon men unless the actual power of the living Christ continued to quicken men out of the death of sin and self into the new life of sonship with God. What would it signify that He arose, if we had no token that His victory was meant to be available for us victoriously? But His power is here. It is the power which men beheld in Him, as He lived among them in the flesh, still shining out, manifesting the life of the eternal God as our loving Father. It is because of this that we have come to know that we are not the children of the dust, but are the children of the King immortal and eternal, and heirs of "an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away."

Our faith in immortality rests upon the present power of the living Christ.

When we speak of the scientific outlook and hope, we are still in the realm of scientific faith. Hope is simply the flowering of faith. There are certain facts which contribute to the strengthening of the Christian's faith in the continued life of men, to which we will refer. But let us remember that we are talking about faith as something different from knowledge. Many fail to discriminate here. Faith is not final proof. It is an intelligent conviction where final proof is impossible. It is the scientific attitude toward the unknown, regarding that which is probable, in view of that which we do actually know. These facts in history and experience compel us, in consistency, to believe certain things about that which reaches beyond our present experience, and beyond our present ability to prove. It is, as we have shown in the chapter on Faith, that confidence which gives us inspiration and courage and a quiet peace free from doubt; but it is still faith. "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: (1 Cor. 13:12.) now we know in part; but then we shall know even as we are known."

Faith does not claim final proof, but is confident because of facts.

There are intimations of immortality which have been noted in the realm of scientific research, which confirm the Christian's faith. Biologists tell us that in the cell life it is ever out of a dying cell that new life appears. Properly ripened seeds placed in certain conditions will actually live through thou-

sands of years, and seem really immortal. The grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, but out of that death there springs a new and larger life. The recurrence of the spring time witnesses to the persistence of life. The phenomena of spirit, to which we have referred in former chapters, indicate that it is spirit which abides, while material things are temporal. The most recent scientific contributions to this subject are in the realm of psychology. There are leading specialists in psychology from some of our most prominent universities who have investigated the phenomena which appear to point to the continued existence of the human spirit. Such men as Professors James of Harvard, Hyslop of Columbia, Hodgson of Cambridge, and others, all testify that the facts which have come under their observation compel them to believe that the evidence is sufficient to demonstrate this continued existence of the discarnate spirit. In so far as the dictum of science counts with men, this verdict of the leaders in the department of modern psychology is to be noted as confirming the Christian faith most heartily. This is the latest contribution of science to religion.

Intimations of immortality in nature.

There is a consideration of even stronger character as we noted the evident capacity of the human soul to rise into the fellowship of God. Man is gifted with the germs of infinite development. There is in the human soul an ever recurring conviction that

something larger and higher is waiting to be realized beyond that yet attained. There is a moral discernment, an inherent longing for spiritual unfolding, an enkindling hope of immortality. These are so many pledges of the Creator written into the very fibre of the human soul. All the progress of creation has pointed upward to something still higher in the sweep of the evolution of life. This capacity to reach Godward is the prophecy of its fulfillment, for all nature has ever been faithful to satisfy the fullest capacity of the lower forms of creation. To believe that death is the end of all this development of life would be to count the universe a failure, and to deny the conviction of the poet that there is a "far off divine event toward which the whole creation moves." We recall the evidence of love in all law, and the evidence of the tendency to develop individuality in the creature, and we say these intimations in nature which point to the continued existence of the human spirit have a strong probability in their favor. This probability is made stronger by the fact that men from the beginning of human history have believed in this continued life, and have clung to it as a cherished hope, and dreamed of it as a fulfillment of the things unfinished here.

Man's capacity for fellowship with God.

But when all these intimations are noted, their inadequacy to satisfy the human soul is apparent. The reason has been already stated. Nothing but the power which can bring life to light here can throw any light

upon the problem of immortality which will satisfy mankind. It is when Jesus Christ speaks out of that marvelous life, which we have attempted to describe in the seventh chapter, that men are ready to hear. No other has thus spoken. That was a significant moment, (John 6: 66-68) when some of His disciples turned away from following him because of some hard sayings, and He turned to those who knew Him best, saying, "Will ye also go away?" "Then Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." It is because He lived before them in the continuous manifestation of the power of the living God, that men became convinced that they were to be lifted into the presence of God through Him. That is the reason for the fact that thousands of believing followers, through the centuries, have had such an unspeakable comfort from those blessed words which He spake, as He was about to go to the Father again: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. (John 14: 1-3.) I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Still the only reasonable faith is in Christ.

This same Christ, as we have shown, is living today with far larger place in the world's life than He had then. Science teaches that the final test of

power is life. How few are the names that live out of the past! How few the lives that have power in our lives today! And let it be noted that whatever truly lives is more and more centered in Jesus Christ. Every passing century finds Christ holding an increasing place in the living forces at work in human life. We have spoken of the reality of the unseen. That reality must be emphasized again in this connection. It is when the human soul has come into the sonship with Christ, and has realized that the most vital experience in all its conscious life is the power of Jesus Christ to enable us to die unto sin and live unto righteousness,—it is then that he knows what the Apostle Paul meant when he cried: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." (2 Tim. 1: 12.) To such the horizon broadens and sweeps past the narrow limitations of earth and time, and again we must revise the old saying "seeing is believing," and say, "believing is seeing."

Living power still manifest in the living Christ.

It is important to appreciate clearly the scientific method by which the Christian comes to his confident faith in the teaching of Jesus Christ concerning the life to come. He begins with the teachings concerning this life, and puts them to the test. All that Christ has taught concerning this life he has proved to be true. Every effort to put Christ's teachings into the daily life

Christ tested and

has demonstrated that Christ's is the one life worth living here. Its joy, its comfort, its strength, its victory, are all the realities of actual experience to the earnest soul. Therefore one thing is forever settled for men, namely, that for this life Christ is the best Guide, and the best Master we can have. It is the scientific experience of realizing the product which comes from accepting the greatest specialist in character as our Teacher and Lord. Men who claim to desire the best this life can afford are not true to this undeniable fact in the history of Christian experience, unless they take Christ for their Lord for this life, if for nothing more.

proved as the trustworthy Master for this life.

But Christ has also taught us of the continued life of the immortal soul. Can we do anything toward proving the truth of this teaching also? Yes. We can do exactly what all scientists do with a statement which can be taken as a working hypothesis. The whole point to Christ's teaching is that men are to live as if His teaching is true. Exactly this is the scientific process. Whenever a statement is put forth by a student of science announcing his conviction concerning something as probable in the realm of the unknown, men at once test his teaching by acting as if it were true, in order to see what will be the result. If the result of the experiment be according to the teaching, it is accepted as true thenceforth; but if the result

How to test Christ's teaching concerning the future life.

should disappoint, then the teaching is rejected. Now this is exactly the scientific method of the Christian. He has taken Christ's teaching concerning the continued life of man, and has tested it by living as if it is true. He has lived as unto God, rather than as unto men. He has builded character for eternity, not simply a reputation for time. And what is the result? Divide the race into two classes: first, those who believe in the teaching of Christ, and live accordingly; and second, those who do not. The proof is overwhelming. The teaching and the life agree. That which Christ has promised to those who live thus has been realized. Therefore science demands that men, having thus scientifically tested the teachings of Christ, as far as man can, must believe His teachings to be true.

There is no possible escape from this faith as scientific, if men will be true to the scientific method which the Christian applies at this point. Moreover there is no more room to wonder why the Christian is so confident of His living, mighty Saviour. For him to doubt would be to deny the most real experience of his inmost soul. This fact also explains the growing place of the Christian faith in human life the world over. It is the power of the living Christ touching men as they catch a vision of the beauty of the outlook from the earthly to the heavenly, the inspiration in the truth that character is the exponent of

No escape from the Christian's

hope as scientific.

the undying soul, and the glorious hope of the development of the Christian life, begun here, through the endless years. Dr. James Orr has pointed out with careful detail the evidence of the movement from skepticism to faith in the thinking world. It is inevitable. There may be backward eddies at the edges of the stream, but it is rolling onward in increasing power. Faith was never as strong as it is today, and it faces the gigantic task of conquering unbelief and ignorance and sin with a sublime confidence that is in itself an inspiration to earnest men. It is this outlook, based upon actual experience, which compels the blessed hope of the Christian concerning the continuing life of the redeemed in Jesus Christ their risen Lord.

There are certain questions which have been raised by inquiring minds in connection with this discussion, to which some reference should be made. One is as to the nature of the mode of subsistence by the immortal spirit. Here we have a material body which is laid aside. How can we imagine the discarnate spirit getting on? The Apostle Paul has dealt with the problem in a strictly scientific way. (1 Cor. 15: 25-54.) He points out the fundamental fact, manifest in nature, that the Creator has always attended to these matters, and will continue to do so in the ongoing of the life of His creatures. Then Paul points out that the distinctive feature about each creature is that it has been given a body, a mode

of subsistence, exactly adapted to its environment. He calls attention to the fact that there is one flesh of birds, another of fish and another of man. That is to say, these three creatures live in different sorts of environment, and each is given a mode of subsistence, by means of a physical body, which is adapted to its environment. No one of the three could subsist as the others do. This lesson from creation is clear. The immortal spirit will have an available medium, an appropriate body, a mode of subsistence exactly adapted to the environment in which he is to live. Paul teaches clearly that it is not the same body which is here laid aside, but one which God will give, as it pleaseth Him, in view of His purpose as to the character of the continuing life. We have already noted the fact of the freedom of the spirit even in connection with this earthly body, and we can scientifically conceive of a relation of the spirit to a material substance, like light for instance, which will enable a freedom of action beyond our power to appreciate now. The God who gives the life and its power will take care of the method of its exercise.

Query about the immortal spirit's mode of subsistence.

Another query which has been a source of doubt and unbelief in many minds is in regard to the salvation of those who do not accept Christ in this life, whether knowing Him and rejecting Him willfully, or not having an opportunity to know Him. So far as science throws light on the question its message

has no hope. For science clearly teaches that everywhere a tendency continued develops into permanency. Therefore science insists that a man who persists in neglecting his spiritual welfare here is not likely ever to be concerned about it. Science will not allow that easy supposition of so many that of course men will be earnest in the future about the making of character as unto God, who are not earnest about it now. Science gives no sign of hope to the man who refuses to enter into the sonship of God now in the day of his opportunity. Science teaches that a plastic time in the growth of every living thing passes, and its form becomes fixed at last. Science tells a man that if a capacity is neglected it ceases to exist. Science teaches that failure to obey the law of growth means deterioration and death. Science teaches that if a functional member is not exercised, it becomes atrophied, helpless and useless. To the man, therefore, who knows of the way of life in Christ, who has the offer of adoption into the sonship of God, and who ignores, or neglects, or refuses the same, science has no word of hope, but only unceasing condemnation. For all those who have not had the opportunity to know Christ, the New Testament teaches that God is just, and will deal with them according to their light. We can trust Him and His wondrous love.

Science gives no hope to one who rejects Christ.

But these considerations must intensify again our sense of responsibility in a two-fold way. First, our

responsibility to make the most of our opportunities to grow into the fullness of the sonship of God while the time is still available for us. John the beloved puts the thought thus for us (1 John 3:1-3): "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man who hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

We must make the most of our opportunities to realize a Christ-like character.

Ah, yes! that is the vital truth. We may seriously question our hearts as to the character of our real hope, as evidenced by our striving to be pure. What heed are we giving to the teachings of science concerning the cultivation of the spiritual life? What inspiration are we finding in the promises of God for growth into the sonship with Christ? Surely, if this be worth anything, it is worth everything to the immortal soul! Yet many live as if it were not supreme. All the facts we have considered lead us to wonder how sane men will thus live in indifference to the way of truest blessings. Our day is passing. It is ours to sieze its opportunities and realize the Christian character at its most and at its best.

Then the second phase of the responsibility is in connection with our stewardship, and the trust which is upon us to live Christ and to give Christ, in view

of the need of our fellow men. Paul puts the thought in a very striking phrase, as he writes to the Colossians: "Christ in you is the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27.) The apostle did not say "Christ in us," including himself with them. But his thought evidently was that Christians must realize that the only hope of the coming glory being actually experienced in the earth is that Christ shall be given His place in the lives of others, and still others, until Christ is in every man. This is the intelligent ground for the hope. We have seen how it is increasing; but we also see the reason for the plea for greater consecration and zeal until the whole earth shall be filled with His glory. Meantime, as the earthly tenement is left behind, and the redeemed spirits enter into the joy of the Lord, to behold the King in His beauty, that blessed word of the apostle is upon our lips, as we bid our loved ones farewell for a little time—"Christ in you is the hope of glory." Because He lives, they and we shall live also. We smile through the tears as we rise out of the trials into triumph, out of griefs into the glimpse of glory, out of sorrow into song.

We must be more earnest about our stewardship for souls.

Another question about which many wonder with longing is whether we shall know our beloved in the future life. It is a question which should never have occasioned so much of worry on the part of so many Christians, for the teaching of the Bible is perfectly clear. The disciples on the mount of trans-

figuration recognized Moses and Elijah whom they had never seen in the flesh. (Matt. 17:1-8.) In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Christ clearly teaches the recognition in the unseen world of those who knew each other here. (Luke 16:24.) Moreover all the considerations which enter into the appreciation of the continued development of our present capacities and powers make it impossible to have intelligent conceptions of that life without realizing that we will then enjoy all the powers which we enjoy now, and in far greater measure. We have spoken of the teaching in nature that God is concerned in the development of individuality in His creatures. That same concern enters into the scientific conception of the continued life of the human spirit. In full accord with these considerations are the specific words from the Apostle Paul, (1 Cor. 13:12), "Now we know in part: then we shall know even as we are known."

Our loved ones will be recognized among the redeemed.

It would be desirable if the reader would turn at this point to the table of contents and read through again the entire movement of the thought of the book. From that survey of the whole teaching of nature and Scripture he would realize that every evidence points forward to the life of increasing activity and growth through the years. The present thought of man is only able to conceive of the possibilities of such development as limitless. Eternity will ever beckon us on to larger knowledge, to richer

experience, to increasing fellowship in the sonship of God. The one regret will be that we were so heedless of the life of God which we have now, and that we did not rejoice to do our Father's will in these days of privilege. The folly of our indifference now to the blessedness of Christ-like service is the pathos of Christian history. All the vision we may have of the joy of the redeemed should incite us now to such a completeness of consecration, that it might be said of us, as of just one follower of Christ in the Scripture record: "He hath done what he could. She hath done what she could." It is for us to realize as our own working experience of the Christian life those words of the Apostle Paul, (2 Cor. 4: 6-5: 1), "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. . . . Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. . . . For which cause we faint not; but though

Eternity to be marked by an ever richer growth into the sonship of God.

our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen; but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

With such an outlook and such a hope we can enter with appreciation into the vision of John, whose prophetic eye saw the coming day when the living Christ, who is the only true source of the world's life, who is the only worthy Master of the world's service, who is the only certain Hope of the world's redemption, will be the one glorified object of the world's love and praise. With a sublime unfolding of imagination, John gives us the vision in these inspiring words (Rev. 4: 1-2, 5: 1-13): "After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong

angel proclaiming with a loud voice. Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not, behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain. . . . And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne. . . . And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on

The vision of the glory of Christ our Saviour.

earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

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"faith is a reasonable inference
from accepted facts."
is not antagonistic to reason
faith is the result of reasoning
from facts concerning that which
is not yet known

"Force is the product of mind."